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THE
PAROUSIA

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINES OF
CHRIST'S SECOND COMING; HIS REIGN AS KING;
THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD; AND
THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

SECOND EDITION

BY
ISRAEL P. WARREN, D.D

—δυνάμεις μέλλοντος αἰῶνος—Heb. 6: 5

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The scope of this book may be briefly stated, thus: Eschatology as a system of doctrine rests on three facts definitely asserted by our Lord and his apostles, viz.:

1. Christ, after his ascension, would come again to mankind, an event which he called his PAROUSIA.
2. He would then establish his kingdom on earth, would raise the dead, and judge the world.
3. That Parousia should occur soon—in the course of the existing generation.

It is obvious that any true theory of this subject must take into it all these facts. Each is fundamental; each must have an equal share in determining its form as a whole, and the adjustment of its details. In no other way can a complete, self-consistent, and satisfactory view be obtained.

Now it needs but a slight acquaintance with our heretofore accepted eschatology to perceive that it has been constructed, for the most part, *with the third of the said fundamental facts left out*. That fact has been sometimes ignored, sometimes denied, and sometimes by various exegetical devices emptied of its meaning, and even made to affirm the direct opposite of the natural import of its words. Is it any wonder that confusion and perplexity have supervened respecting the whole subject, that large numbers feel utterly at a loss as to

what to believe, and that anyone who ventures to have positive convictions is put down, ipso facto, as a visionary or a victim of his own self conceit?

The task, then, which I have attempted, has been to reconstruct this doctrine with *all three facts included*. In this lies whatever is distinctive in the book. That it has necessitated some change in the general aspects of the doctrine is freely admitted. That it has not impaired its impressiveness and force I certainly believe. It has been to me a constant source of delight to see how Scripture passages which had seemed hopelessly obscure, when approached from this standpoint, dropped their obscurity and took their places in the structure as if originally designed and fitted for them. This self harmonizing process, indeed, has been throughout one of the most satisfactory evidences that the structure itself was in the main true to the idea of the Divine Author.

The first edition of this book was published five years ago, and was received with a degree of favor much greater than I had dared to hope for. I have availed myself of the kindly criticisms bestowed upon it to correct a few errors, and to supply some defects in the argument which have been pointed out. The Third Part, on the Resurrection, has been entirely re-written, and greatly enlarged. I have seen no cause to abandon or modify in any essential particular the general view of the subject then advanced; on the contrary, I have been greatly confirmed therein by all that I have heard or read respecting it.

Several works by other authors have appeared in these five years, some bearing directly on the Parousia, and others on related subjects with more or less reference to this. It has been very gratifying to find to what extent

Christian scholars have been turning their inquiries in this direction, and how generally they incline to views on the subject not widely different from those here presented. I need refer especially to but one, an anonymous English book bearing a title remarkably similar to this, which it is due to myself to say, I had never seen nor heard of till my own was printed and in the bindery.

It is greatly to be hoped that the discussions that have of late been had respecting the doctrine of the Last Things, which with much truth has been pronounced the "Undeveloped Department of Theology," will go forward under the light of advanced scholarship and science until it has become as clearly settled as its related topics of the Trinity, Atonement, Justification, etc., of all which indeed, it is the complement and crown. If the present volume may contribute anything towards so desirable a result, its author will be more than content.

PORTLAND, ME., Feb., 1884.



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PART I.

THE PAROUSIA.

CHAPTER I.

THE TERM AND ITS SIGNIFICATION.

THE distinctive word employed in the New Testament to denote the second coming of our Lord is, in the original, THE PAROUSIA.¹ "What shall be the sign of thy *parousia*?" "So shall be the *parousia* of the Son of Man." Matt. 24: 3, 27, 37, 39.

It occurs twenty-four times, of which seventeen refer to Christ's coming. In the other seven, three have the rendering *presence* in our (Revised) version. "His bodily *presence* (the *parousia* of his body) is weak." 2 Cor. 10: 10. "As ye have always obeyed, not as in my *presence* only." Phil. 2: 12. "That your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my *presence* with you again." Phil. 1: 26. In three more, *presence* would have given the most exact expression of the idea. "I re-

¹ "The *Parousia* of Christ is in the whole N. T. the habitual technical designation of the last coming of Christ." Meyer, 1 Cor. 15: 23.

joyce at the *presence* of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, for that which was lacking on your part they supplied, for they refreshed my spirit and yours.”¹ 1 Cor. 16: 17. “God comforted us by the *presence* of Titus, and not by his presence only.”² 2 Cor. 7: 6. “Whose *parousia* is according to the working of Satan.” 2 Thess. 2: 8. The reference is to the “Man of Sin,” whose manifestation, by a play of words, is called by the same name as that of Christ. The nature of the case requires for it the same signification.

Parousia (Παρουσία) is derived from the compound verb *παύειμι*, from *παρά*, with and *εἶμι*, to be; literally, to be with, or present. The definitions of it given in Liddell and Scott’s larger Lexicon are:—

“I. *To be by, or present* (Iliad 2, 485); often in participles, *παρών*, one present; *ὁ παρών*, one absent. 2. *To be by or near one*; c. *dat.*, to be present in or at. 3. *To be present to help*, come to aid, stand by, like Lat. *adesse*. 4. *παρῆναι εἰς*, to arrive at, or more strictly, to have arrived at. 5. *παρῆναι ἐκ*, to have come from.—II. Of things. *To be by*, i.e., ready, or at hand. Lat. *praesto esse*. So of feelings, states of mind, etc. Of time; *ὁ παρών νῦν χρόνος*; present state of affairs, present circumstances. *Τὰ παρόντα*, as adv., like *τὸ νῦν*. III. Imper., *πάρεσθαι μοι*.—Παρουσία. I. A being present, presence—of persons, of things. 2. Arrival. II. Like *τὰ παρόντα*, present circumstances. II. Substance, property, abundance.”

The verb *παύειμι* (*pareimi*) is not used in the N. T. of the second coming. This fact, I think, is

¹“The men as ambassadors from the Corinthians, were the compensation to the apostle for the lack of the *presence* of the latter.” Meyer. So Rosenmüller, Bloomfield, Hodge, Alford.

²“Not only through the *reunion* with him did God comfort us.” Meyer.

worthy of notice. In other words, that which when *named* is called the Parousia, is never described by the verb from which that name is derived. It is used, however, in other connections, twenty-two times, in sixteen of which it is rendered to be *present*, or by its equivalent. In the other six, the strict etymological sense would best represent the meaning,—“Friend, do that for which thou *art here*.”¹ Matt. 26: 50. “The Master *is here* and calleth thee.”—John 11: 28.² “What is the cause wherefore ye *are here*?” Acts 10: 21. The R. V. renders the very same expression in verse 33,—“Now therefore we are all *here present*.”³ “These that have turned the world upside down *are present* also here.”⁴ Acts 17: 6. “My time is not yet *here*.” John 7: 6. “The gospel which is *here* with you.”⁵ Col. 1: 6. “They were *present* before him with one accord.”⁶ Acts 12: 20.

¹ “Friend, mind what you *are here* for!” Meyer.

² “Magister adest.” Lat. Vul.

³ “In conspectu suo adsumus.” Lat. Vul.

⁴ “*Are present* also here, as they have been in other places.” Hackett.

⁵ Meyer, in view of the preposition “unto you,” says that the conception of the arrival predominates, but adds, “Observe, moreover, the emphasis of *tou parontos*; it is there! it has not remained away; and to the *presence* is then added the bearing fruit.”

⁶ “Literally, *were present*, the antecedent motive being implied.” Hackett. Meyer regards it not a change of place, but of feeling. He renders *πρός*, “before him,” and gives as the meaning, “turned towards him.”

It is then, I submit, sufficiently obvious, that the strict and proper meaning of *parousia* is *presence*. It is its formative meaning, according to which our ideas of the event to which it applies should be shaped, unless other imperative reasons forbid. And this is true, even though it be conceded that in some cases the remoter, derivative meaning be preferable. A presence implies, of course, an antecedent coming. When looked at in anticipation, with strong desire for some good which is then to be enjoyed—as the disciples looked forward to the Parousia of Christ,—the mind naturally concentrates its thought on the moment of beginning. The wife who longs for the return of her husband from the war cares for the *coming* because it is to be followed by the *remaining*. The weary night watcher who sighs for the approaching day exclaims, “Would God it were morning!” And yet the morning is not the same thing as the day. A man who promises to pay his note on a given *day*, does not promise to pay it at *sunrise*.

Dr. Tyng, in the Premillennial Essays, (p. 40), when professing to give the exact meaning of the words, says of *parousia*:—“The literal rendering of this term is ‘the becoming present.’ It marks the moment when absence ceases and presence begins. It excludes all idea of a prolonged period.” I beg leave to dissent. Let the trial be made, in the passages where the meaning is obvious. Paul’s bodily presence was weak; was it only for the moment in which it began? He rejoiced at the coming of Ste-

phanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus; was it only at the instant of their arrival? God comforted him by the coming of Titus; was it only a momentary comfort? Dr. Tyng fortifies his assertion by referring to Matt. 24: 27; "As the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west, so shall be the Parousia of the Son of man;" and says, "There is nothing in nature so instantaneous as this." But how manifestly is the point of comparison not its instantaneousness but its *publicity*. The Parousia should not occur far away in the desert solitudes, it should not be in the secret chambers, but should fill the whole heaven with its glory.¹ Ten verses further on, it is also said, "As were the days of Noah, so shall be the Parousia of the Son of man." If duration be the point of comparison, it must cover at least a hundred and twenty years. Gen. 6: 3.

I must insist, therefore, considering its etymology and primary meanings, as given by the highest lexical authority, and noting the fact that in no less than twenty-eight instances of its occurrence, either as substantive, verb, or participle, in the N. T., when referring to other matters than the second coming of Christ, the word clearly bears the import of *presence*

¹ "The advent of the Messiah will not be of such a nature that you will require to be directed to look here or to look there, in order to see him, but it will be as the lightning, which, as soon as it appears, suddenly announces its presence *everywhere*. What is meant is that when it takes place, it will all of a sudden openly display itself in a glorious fashion *over the whole world*." Meyer.

or *being present*, that such is its true and precise meaning when applied to that coming.

It is not difficult to perceive in what way the word came to be thus used by the disciples. They had now, on the eve of the crucifixion, become in some degree familiar with the idea that their Lord was about to leave them for a time and afterwards return, and that he would then set up the new kingdom they were looking for, and reward therein his faithful friends who had followed him unto death. Matt. 16: 27, 28. Their conceptions, indeed, were very imperfect, but, such as they were, they awoke the highest expectations, and prompted to unseemly rivalries for the foremost place in its honors. Contrasting, then, that eagerly expected period with his brief present stay with them, they seem to have fondly named it "The Presence," as implying that he would thereafter remain with them and admit them into relations of intercourse and intimacy surpassing all they had before enjoyed.¹ The word thus adopted was immediately sanctioned by Christ himself, who proceeded to answer their inquiries as to the times and the signs of its occurrence.

Let this meaning be tested by the insertion of the word Presence, in the passages which speak of the Parousia. "What shall be the sign of thy *Pres-*

¹"After his repeated intimations of future suffering and death, the disciples could not conceive of the advent of Jesus to set up his kingdom and make a *permanent stay* in any other way than as a solemn second coming." Meyer.

ence?" Matt. 24: 3.¹ "So shall be the *Presence* of the Son of man." Matt. 24: 27, 37, 39.² "Then they that are Christ's in³ (or during) his *Presence*." 1 Cor. 15: 23. "Are not even ye before our Lord Jesus Christ in (or during) his *Presence*?" 1 Thess. 2: 19.⁴ "In the *Presence* of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." 1 Thess. 3: 13. "We that are alive, that are left unto the *Presence* of the

¹ "What the sign of thy *Presence*." Hales, quoted approvingly by Bloomfield.

"Porro quærunt, quodnam Presentiæ Christi futurum esse signum?" (They ask, what shall be the sign of Christ's *Presence*?) Rosenmüller.

"Its *permanence* is emphasized in contrast with the shortness of his former visitation, for the word translated *coming* properly signifies *Presence*." Reuss, *Hist. Ch. Theology*, p. 190.

² "Here, again, our translation misleads. *Parousia* means not *coming*; it means *Presence*, being present, as is plain by referring to its root, *pareimi*, I am present. The taking of all these things so as to be *seen* is of itself complete proof of the presence (not ocularly visible presence, but presence in the scriptural sense) of Christ." Stuart, *Bib. Sac.*, Vol. IX. p. 455.

"Jesus described this judgment on Jerusalem in the symbolic language of prophecy, as connected with his *Presence*, and bade his disciples await his coming, and recognize it in that event." Dollinger, *First Age*, Vol. II. p. 7.

"His *Presence*, which he called in prophetic language a coming on the clouds of heaven, would consist in the manifestation of his divine interposition in human affairs as the exalted protector of his church." *Id.*, p. 71.

³ "Rather perhaps *in* than *at*." Canon Evans.

⁴ "It is a remarkable fact that in this epistle St. Paul alludes no less than four times to the coming of Christ, and uses to describe it the word *parousia*, presence." Farrar, *Life of Paul*, Vol. I. p. 597.

Lord." 1 Thess. 4: 15.¹ "Preserved entire, without blame, in the *Presence* of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5: 23. "We beseech you, brethren, touching the *Presence* of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. 2: 1. "And bring to nought by the manifestation of his *Presence*." 2 Thess. 2: 8.² "Be patient unto the *Presence* of the Lord,—the *Presence* of the Lord is at hand." James 5: 7, 8. "We made known unto you the power and *Presence* of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1: 16. "Where is the promise of his *Presence*?" 2 Peter 3: 4. "Looking for and earnestly desiring the *Presence* of the day of God." 2 Peter 3: 12. "And not be ashamed before him in his *Presence*." 1 John 2: 28. Also, 2 Thess. 2: 9; "Whose (the Man of Sin's) *presence* is according to the working of Satan." Is it not evident to all who carefully consider the import of these passages, in their connection, that this substituted rendering gives a more impressive meaning than those contained in our version?

It is in the highest degree confirmatory of this conclusion, that the Revised Version, in every instance where it does not put *presence* into the text as the representative of *parousia*, inserts the marginal note, "Gr. *presence*," thus affirming that such

¹ "Who remain unto the *Presence* (or return) of the Lord." Lünemann.

² "By the appearance of his *Presence*." Lünemann.

"This wicked one Christ will destroy, etc ; i.e., he will execute judgment on this Man of Sin as he will also on Jerusalem; both alike will be the effect of his *Presence* (*parousia*)." Dolinger, *First Age*, Vol. II. pp. 71, 96.

is its real meaning. Why the Revisers did not then place it in the text where it belongs, they do not inform us.

It is important to observe that this word, when used in this sense, is always *singular*. It is never used of the first advent of the Lord when he dwelt among men in the flesh. That was indeed a coming to men, a sojourn with them, but it is never called a parousia. Nor is the word "second" ever joined with it, as when we speak of the "second coming" or "second advent." The Scriptures never speak of a second Parousia. Nor is it applied, like the word coming, to particular divine manifestations or works occurring in his rule over men, so that we can speak of his various parousias.¹

Accordingly, it is always accompanied by the article *the*, which in Greek is distinctive and emphatic, implying that it is in some sense a special and unique presence, to be distinguished from all others. Whatever was its nature, it was to be something peculiar, having never occurred before, and being never to occur again. It was to be a Presence differing from and superior to all other divine manifestations to men, so that its name should properly stand by itself, needing no other qualifying epithet, *The Presence*.

¹ "The expression, 'the Parousia of Christ,' denotes in the N. T. the second advent, and *this alone*." Auberlen.

CHAPTER II.

THE NATURE OF THE PAROUSIA.

THE work of salvation is represented in the Scriptures,—doubtless in condescension to our human faculties,—as having been the object of consultation and covenant between the Persons of the Trinity, before the creation of the world. The Divine Logos, or Son, is said to have offered himself for its performance, consenting to the temporary relinquishment of his divine honors, and to the humiliations and sufferings involved in taking a human nature, living a human life, and dying an ignominious and painful death, thereby making an atonement for sin which would render pardon possible. This offer the Father, as the representative of eternal law and justice, is said to have accepted, and in return for it to have given the world, thus redeemed, to the Son, to be in a peculiar sense his, to be possessed, governed, and disposed of by him for its own salvation and the manifestation of his glory. “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death.” Isa. 53: 12. “I will give thee the heathen (the nations) for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” Ps. 2: 8. “There

was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him." Dan. 7: 14. "We behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor." Heb. 2: 9. "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12: 2. "Who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore, also, God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name," etc. Phil. 2: 6-11. See also Matt. 11: 27; 28: 18; John 3: 35; 5: 27; 1 Cor. 15: 25-28; Eph. 1: 20-23.

This dignity—called often by a single term, his "glory,"—involved several offices which we usually consider as distinct. In our day we divide government into three departments, the legislative, judicial, and executive, but this is a device unknown in early times and absolute monarchies. The Hebrew kings sat on their thrones in the gates of their cities, and "executed judgment and justice" for their people. 2 Sam. 8: 15; 15: 2; 1 Kings, 3: 9; Isa. 32: 1. In the Old Testament, God is everywhere styled both King and Judge, and the records of his will are termed interchangeably his laws, his statutes, and his

judgments. "The verbs," says Hengstenberg, "which signify *to judge*, in the Shemitish languages have for the most part the secondary meaning to reign, because in ancient times both functions were usually confined to one person."¹ Thus *Christ the King*, according to Scripture usage, signifies also, *Christ the Judge*, the two supreme offices being conjointly and inseparably exercised by him in his administration over this world. See also Isa. 11: 4, 5; 42: 4; John 5: 22, 26, 27; Matt. 25: 31-46.

In addition to these and transcending all the functions of an earthly monarch, our Lord in his kingdom was to have the prerogative of *giving life to the dead*. His kingdom was to extend over a realm of moral death—a domain of souls "dead in trespasses and sins." Their entrance into it was to be by a new birth, called variously a "re-generation," a "new creation," a "resurrection from the dead," etc. John 1: 12, 13; 3: 3; Rom. 6: 4-11; Eph. 2: 5. This new life should pervade the whole nature of man, the physical as well as spiritual. Redemption was to be co-extensive with the fall; the resurrection the complement of regeneration. "I am," said Christ, "the resurrection and the life." John 11: 25. When his work of grace should be completed, man would stand restored in all the elements of his nature, "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." Rom. 8: 21.

¹Christology of the O. T., Vol. I. p. 295. "The Lord is our Judge; the Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King; he will save us." Isa. 33: 22.

The supreme dignity of our glorified Lord, then, was to involve the threefold offices of King, Life-giver and Judge. Their administration, further, was to be unique in this, that they were to be a government of *grace*, having in it the special provision of pardon for the guilty, which feature we designate by the term *mediatorial*,—accomplishing thus what else would be impossible, the harmonizing of equity with pardon, enabling God to “be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.”

This recital of the familiar truths involved in the revealed plan of redemption will, if I mistake not, lead us to the true idea of the Parousia. *It is the presence of Christ in this world in the exercise of his mediatorial offices.* In this view, it is the complement and the contrast of the first advent, when he came in the flesh. It is for the completion of the work which he then began. It is for the harvesting of the seed then sown. Matt. 13: 37–43. The former, according to the nature of its work, was temporary;¹ this is to be permanent. That was associated with memories of sorrow, humiliation, and death; this with the promise of perpetuity and glory and blessedness. The one was a day of “visitation” to men (Luke 19: 44); the other of “abode” with them. John 14: 23. What better term for such an abode could be devised than one which includes all the ideas of grace and

¹The phrase in Heb. 2: 7, 9, “made a little lower than the angels,” should undoubtedly read “made lower than the angels for a little while.” Most authorities agree in this, though Alford dissents. The Revised Version places this rendering in the margin.

joy involved in the exercise of his great offices, the *Parousia*,—a blessed and eternal PRESENCE with them?

This presence, I remark further, I understand to be a *literal* one. The expression, "Christ's literal presence, or coming," is often taken as meaning nothing less than a *material and visible* one, so that the denial of such a coming is thought to be a rejection of the doctrine of his literal coming. This is wholly unwarranted. It might as well be said that to deny that God is a material and visible being is to deny his literal existence. The *Parousia* is a literal presence, as truly as when Christ says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there *am I* in the midst of them." It is not a figurative one, not one existing constructively or as an object of thought, but a true, actual presence, as real, though not under the same conditions, as when he was here in the flesh.

It is also a *personal* Presence. The same unwarranted restriction of meaning is often given to this phrase, as if Christ could not be personally present unless subject to the senses of sight and touch. How often after his resurrection did he render himself invisible to his disciples while he was with them. By a personal presence I mean that Christ is here himself in *propria persona*, not merely by the official work of the Spirit, nor by any representative whatever.

Whether, in point of fact, that Presence ever will be a visible one, with a visible initiation or "coming"

and an external sensuous kingdom, is at this stage of the discussion, premature to inquire. What I have said is sufficient to show that that question is not one that at all involves its essential nature, the time of its occurrence, or the purposes for which it was appointed.

CHAPTER III.

THE SCOPE OF THE PAROUSIA.

MUCH of the difficulty of reaching any consistent view of the Parousia has arisen from the impression that it was to occupy only a brief space of time, rather than a long period. Doubtless our English version has strengthened if not created that impression, by uniformly translating the Greek preposition *ἐν*, in this connection, by *at*, a word that we apply rather to a *point* of time than a prolonged duration. To say that something shall occur *at* Christ's coming, conveys a perceptibly different shade of meaning from saying it shall take place *in* or *during* his Presence. Yet a mere glance at a Greek Concordance will show that the instances in which the word elsewhere means and is rendered *in* are at least ten times as numerous as where it means and is translated *at*. Why the translators always gave it this comparatively infrequent signification, in this connection, does not appear.

This protracted duration of the Parousia is a fact of so much importance, that it deserves particular consideration.

If we wished to measure the breadth of the ocean, we should carefully determine the exact positions of points known to lie upon its shores, or to be included

within its expanse. Having the longitude of New York and the longitude of Gibraltar, it is not difficult to compute from these with great accuracy the distance between them ; in other words, the dimensions of the space intervening. So there are certain things which it is expressly declared shall take place in or during the Parousia, that, if we mistake not, will no less surely guide us to a correct idea of its duration.

1. The first, as all know, was the establishment of the new "kingdom of heaven." The old theocracy founded by Moses was to pass away, and be succeeded by a new one of a more comprehensive sway and a higher glory. "Till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Matt. 16 : 28. "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." Matt. 26 : 64.

2. A second thing to occur in the Parousia was the destruction of Jerusalem. Matt. 24 : 27, 34. Let it be observed that this prediction is not in that part of the chapter which many suppose refers to the day of judgment, but in that which is universally conceded to relate to the overthrow of the temple and city.

3. The vindication and reward of Christians who were persecuted in the primitive churches. In the Epistle of James, after severely reproving the rich for their oppression, he exhorts those who suffered from it, "Be patient, brethren, until the Parousia of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for

the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the Parousia of the Lord is at hand." James 5: 7, 8. I will not now undertake to say precisely when or how this vindication was to be made; it is enough to notice that it was near, and was to take place in or during the Parousia.

4. The destruction of the Man of Sin. "Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his Parousia." 2 Thess. 2: 8. The import of this prediction will be considered further on; it is sufficient here to refer to it as belonging to the great period under consideration.

5. In his epistles to the seven churches in Asia, which constitute the introduction to the Book of Revelation, John announces the repeated warnings of the Lord of his speedy coming to try and reward them according to their fidelity. The word *parousia* is not indeed used in this case, but it will scarcely be denied that the time referred to was identical with it. The familiar imagery used by Christ himself of that event on the Mount of Olives, is employed. "Behold he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they which pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him." There can be no doubt, as it seems to me, that reference is made here to the persecutions then impending over the churches, "the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that

dwelt upon the earth." In that great trial Christ declares that he will "come" to them with searching severity, to detect and punish the unfaithful, to strengthen and comfort his true children, and to reward those who were steadfast unto death with the crown and throne of victory in heaven.

6. The Parousia in express terms was to embrace the resurrection of the dead. "Each one in his own order; Christ the first fruits, then they that are Christ's, in his Parousia." 1 Cor. 15: 23. I need spend no time to establish this connection between the two, it being a truth universally recognized that one of the objects of Christ's coming in his Parousia was to be to raise the dead.

7. The Parousia, in like manner, was to embrace the general judgment. Matt. 25: 31-46. I think, indeed, that that sublime consummation, like the Parousia itself, has a wider scope than is implied in the usual materialistic conceptions of it. But this, at least, is certain, that it is to embrace the whole family of mankind; that there never has been and never will be one to whom it is not appointed to "be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

8. Finally, the Parousia was to include that "day of God by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," to be succeeded by the "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Pet. 3: 12, 13.

Here then is a predicted period which was to embrace within it these *eight* specific things, at least. This, be it observed, is not a matter of inference, but of express Scripture assertion. Its commencement was "at hand" when James wrote, probably before A.D. 45. We know that it had begun at the destruction of Jerusalem, which was in express terms to fall within it. It was to continue till the day of judgment and the last conflagration. And let it be remembered, there is but *one* Parousia. It is not said of either of these events that it was to take place at a Parousia of Christ, but always in *the* Parousia. How is it possible to include them all in one term if you do not make it a term of vast breadth and comprehensiveness? ¹

Something, at least, *must* be done to harmonize these testimonies of the divine word. We cannot take up the overthrow of the temple, the founding of the new kingdom of the Messiah, the destruction of the Man of Sin, and the disciplinary "coming" of the Lord to the seven churches, and carry them forward into the future, as events which are still to take place. We cannot reach forward to the resurrection and the judgment, and carry them back to the generation when Christ was on earth in the flesh. The grand programme of the world's history under the administration of our Lord, with its mighty pro-

¹ "The coming again of the Lord is not one single act, as his resurrection, or the descent of the Spirit, or his second personal advent, or the final coming to judgment, but *the great complex of all these*, the result of which shall be his taking his people to himself where he is." Alford on John 14: 3.

cession of centuries and ages, refuses to be thus narrowed down to a single point. The powers of the mind revolt at such an attempt, under the pressure of any theory, to do violence to their intuitive convictions. You may resort to the hypothesis of types, making those primitive events the types of the greater ones in the future; you may invent the doctrine of a double sense, under which when one thing is said another thing is meant; or you may devise some other solution, but you must do *something*. For myself, I freely say that, having reflected much upon all these ways, and having tried in vain to feel satisfied with any other, I can find none which seems so simple, so accordant with common sense, so perfectly able to meet all the conditions of the problem, and to exalt and honor our Lord himself, as that which regards the Parousia as covering a vast period of duration, beginning with the generation when he was on earth, and lasting long enough to include all those great events which are to make up the history of time.

Independently, then, of the meaning of the word, we find evidence in its predicted duration confirming the view I have advanced as to its nature. The Parousia is not something pertaining to a point, but to a vast space of time. It is not an event, but a dispensation. Like the ocean expanse, embosoming within it widely distant mountain ranges whose tops alone appear above the surface, its shores are the boundaries of time. It may be studded with myriads of particular events, like the isles of the sea, but they

are all within the one common ocean. To say that because this or that great event has not yet happened—even to the resurrection and the judgment—the Parousia itself has not begun, is as if a voyager at Hawaii should say that, because he has not yet reached Hong Kong, he has not therefore yet embarked upon the Pacific.

CHAPTER IV.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN PAROUSIA AND COMING.

OUR further exhibition of the true nature of the Parousia requires that we should show the distinction between it and a *coming* of Christ.

It is a very noticeable fact, that while the English word *coming* is so often applied to this period in our version and by commentators, there is no corresponding usage to it in the original. The noun *ἐλευσις*, which is the proper derivative of the verb to come, is found but once in the New Testament (Acts 7: 52), where it plainly has reference to Christ's incarnation, or coming in the flesh. Nor is there any other of similar signification; the Greek is *parousia* only. Why, then, we cannot help asking, is the etymological equivalent of the latter so seldom used, and another word which has no representative in the original substituted in its place? Probably the answer is to be found in the example of the Latin Vulgate, which with a few exceptions,¹ translates *parousia* by *adventus* rather than *præsentia*,—for what reason it is in vain to guess. It is a curious speculation how much would ever have been heard of the Second *Advent*, and of all the delusions and fanaticisms resulting from it

¹ 1 Cor. 16: 17; 2 Cor. 10: 10; Phil. 2: 12; 2 Pet. 1: 16. The last instance refers to the Parousia of Christ.

which have marred the history of Christianity, if Jerome had given to *parousia* its true representative in the Latin.¹

The Greek verbs *ἐρχομαι*, *ἔγω*, signifying to come, are used to express Christ's act of *introducing* the Parousia, and of performing various offices and works occurring *under* the Parousia. Of the former, we have an example in Matt. 24: 30; "They shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." This was in answer to the disciples' inquiry as to the *signs that should precede* the Parousia. The coming or manifestation of Christ on the clouds would be the *sign* that the Parousia was about to begin. Of course, the coming could not be the same thing as the Parousia, for this would involve the inconsistency of making a thing the forerunner of itself.

Christ comes to perform particular works under and during the Parousia, as in the cases following:

1. To establish his kingdom among men. Matt. 16: 28.
2. To reward his faithful people, especially the martyrs. Matt. 16: 27; Rev. 22: 12.
3. To chas-

¹ A remarkable instance of critical disingenuousness is shown in Dr. Litch's work, "Christ yet to Come," in reply to my remarks on this distinction. Unable to find a Greek equivalent to the English *coming*, he makes one out of the participle *erchomenos*, which is used of Christ, and declares that that is the equivalent of *Parousia*. "Paul had reference to this statement of Christ as to what will take place at his *erchomenon*—coming." "The very description given of his *erchomenon*—coming, Paul gives of his *Parousia*." "Both Paul and Christ, then, have translated *Parousia* into *erchomenon*." p. 15. Scholars will know how to estimate a critique like that.

tise the backslidden. Rev. 2: 16; 3: 3. 4. To punish persecutors. 2 Thess. 1: 9. 5. To disclose hidden things. 1 Cor. 4: 5. 6. To receive his people to himself at death. John 14: 3. 7. To raise the dead. 1 Thess. 4: 16. 8. To judge the world. Matt. 25: 31-46. And so, in general, whenever Christ in his various mediatorial offices performs any work of grace or judgment among men, it is said to be his *coming* to them.¹

These various uses of the word, as well as the nature of the case, should dispel from our minds the anthropomorphic idea that the coming of Christ implies a literal *approach*. We are to remember that it is the coming of a divine being, who already possesses omnipresence, and cannot be said to *come* and *go* in the same sense as finite persons. We can understand them only, in reference to Christ in his

¹“Venire dicitur Christus in nubibus cœli, quoties gloriam majestatemque suam in singularibus gratiæ, severitatis, et potentiæ suæ effectis demonstrat, et se ecclesiæ quasi præsentem exhibet.”—Vitringa. (Christ is said to come in the clouds of heaven as often as he shows forth his glory and majesty in the particular operations of his grace, severity, and power, and exhibits himself to the church as if present.)

“Christ is said to come whenever he makes manifest his glory as King of the Kingdom of God, in enhanced splendor before the eyes of all. This he did, in its initial stage, during his life on earth, but yet much more after his exaltation to heaven, in the destruction of Jerusalem, for example, in the fall of heathendom, and in the reformation of the church; and it is the task of an exact exegesis to determine with regard to every place in the N. T. (where this is demanded) in what sense precisely *there* a coming of the Lord is spoken of.”—Van Oosterzee, Vol. II. p. 578.

divine offices, in the sense of manifestation. God came down on Mount Sinai when the phenomena of the cloud, the thunder, and the earthquake appeared there, manifesting his presence. So Christ "came by water and blood" (1 John 5: 6), i.e., he was manifested to be a Saviour by the streams that issued from his heart when pierced by the soldier's spear.¹

It follows that while we are permitted to conceive and to speak of but one Parousia of Christ, there may be *many* comings. These are to be regarded as *specific* events under a *generic* dispensation. The Spirit's work on the day of pentecost, the judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira, the conversion of Saul, the deliverances of the apostles from prison, the destruction of Jerusalem, the conversion of Constantine, the Reformation, the conquests of the work of

¹"In Scripture language, God comes whenever he proceeds to do or execute any purpose of his will in respect to man.—But we are never authorized to suppose an actual and *visible* coming but by symbols. God is always and everywhere present, and cannot come and go in the literal sense."—Stuart. Bib. Sac., Vol. IX. pp. 340-1.

See Gen. 11: 5; 18: 21; Ex. 3: 8; Num. 12: 5; 22: 9; Ps. 68: 7; Isa. 64: 3.

"Christ said to the Jewish rulers, at his condemnation, that hereafter they would see the Son of man come in the fullness of his divine power. Thus his presence, which he called in prophetic language 'a coming on the clouds of heaven,' would consist in the *manifestation* of his divine interposition in human affairs, as the exalted Protector of his church. This they would behold, of course, only with the eye of faith, for he had already told them they would then first see or recognize him when they acknowledged and honored him as Messiah."—Döllinger, First Age, Vol. II. p. 71.

missions, revivals, etc., are all popularly spoken of in the same way. They are a recognition of the fact that Christ is the reigning sovereign of the world, and that all things take place under his supreme and holy administration.¹

It is then, I trust, sufficiently evident that the word *coming* and the Latin *advent* are not equivalents of the Greek *parousia*. To recapitulate:—they do not conform to its etymology, nor could they appropriately be substituted for it in numerous instances of its occurrence. Nor is the radical idea of them the same. “Coming” and “advent” give most prominently the conception of an *approach* to us, motion *toward* us; “parousia” that of *being with* us, without reference to how it began. The force of the former ends with the arrival; that of the latter begins with it. Those are words of motion; this of rest. The space of time covered by the action of the former is limited, it may be momentary; that of

¹In this view, it was exactly in the spirit of the old Hebrew diction that Mrs. Howe, in her “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” referring to the uprising of the nation to put down rebellion and slavery, wrote:

“ Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath
are stored,
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

“ I have seen him in the watchfires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded him an altar in the evening dews and
damps;

I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.”

the latter unlimited, continuance that may be eternal. So in respect to place; a coming implies an arrival at some locality; a presence may be universal, "wherever two or three are met." The promise of the Lord's coming to men, therefore, is not the same thing as a promise of his presence with them. The one implies nothing more, necessarily, than a single manifestation, a visit however short; the other implies a stay with them, relations of permanence; not the performance of a single act, but rather a dispensation, including within it many acts, and covering a long period of duration, possibly eternal.

It may be thought that I make more of this distinction than is needful, but I am persuaded otherwise. Had our translators done with this technical word *parousia* as they did with *baptisma*,—transferring it unchanged,—or if translated using its exact etymological equivalent, *presence*, and had it been well understood, as it then would have been, that there is no such thing as a "second Presence," I believe that the entire doctrine would have been different from what it now is. The phrases, "second advent," and "second coming," would never have been heard of. The church would have been taught to speak of THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD, as that from which its hopes were to be realized, whether in the near future or at the remotest period,—that under which the world was to be made new, a resurrection both spiritual and corporeal should be attained, and justice and everlasting awards adminis-

tered. There would have been no difficulty in conceiving that that Presence began to be near at the time when, in the primitive age, it was expected, in that existing generation, and would continue long enough for everything to happen under it which prophecy connects with it. And even now, if we could get rid of the limiting and localizing ideas implied in a *coming*, and substitute for them the universal and eternal possibilities of a *presence*, I believe that nine-tenths of the difficulties attending the subject would disappear, and we should easily return to those simple views which made the Parousia to the apostles and primitive churches a perpetual spring of activity and hope and holy joy.

But we are anticipating. There are other terms which are not unfrequently applied in the New Testament to the same event, but not in the same distinctive way as the one we have considered. Such are ἀποκάλυψις, translated revelation in 1 Pet. 1: 7, 13, and 1 Cor. 1: 7:—ἐπιφάνεια, rendered appearing in 1 Tim. 6: 14; 2 Tim. 1: 10; 4: 1, 8; Titus 2: 13; and manifestation in 2 Thess. 2: 8:—ἐλευσις, translated coming in Acts 7: 52. It is not necessary to dwell upon either of these, for they are used only incidentally, and in an ordinary way, which throws no special light upon the nature of the event itself. The great diversity of signification given them by the translators shows that they saw nothing technical or distinctive in them.

CHAPTER V.

THE TIME OF THE PAROUSIA.

SECTION I.

TESTIMONY OF CHRIST.

The first of the inquiries addressed by the disciples to our Lord on the Mount of Olives, respecting his promised Parousia, was as to the time of its occurrence. "Tell us *when* shall these things be?" Matt. 24: 3. His answer is very full and explicit. Indeed, it may be said that on no subject whatever is the language of the New Testament more abundant or more decisive.

Its *precise* date was not to be revealed, nay, was unknown even to himself. "Of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Mark 13: 32. The exact moment was not among the things committed to him to be disclosed to men. While here in the flesh, his own divine attributes of omniscience and almighty power which, as the eternal Son of God, he possessed equally with the Father, were in a state of abeyance. He had "emptied himself" (Phil. 2: 7), and taken the form of a servant,—acting and speaking in that state of humiliation only through the Spirit (Matt. 12: 28; Acts 1: 2; Heb. 9: 14), as it was given to

him by his Father. John 3: 34; 5: 19, 30; 8: 28; 12: 49.

But this language should not be pressed to convey a meaning not warranted by it. It is very often cited as showing that *nothing* was intended to be known as to the time, and therefore as reproving all those who repeat the inquiry of the apostles. Dr. Hodge referring to it says, "Neither the early Christians nor the apostles knew when the second advent of Christ was to take place." Com. on 1 Cor. 13: 11. And Dean Alford: "The time of his own coming was hidden from all created beings, nay, in the mystery of his mediatorial office, from the Son himself." I submit that this is altogether too sweeping an assertion. In the very next verse preceding he had told the disciples when it should be with sufficient definiteness for all practical purposes,—sufficient to incite them to watchfulness and preparation for it; and he here only forestalls an idle curiosity as to the exact *day and hour*, which, if disclosed, would tend to interfere with the duties of that time. In a similar manner, after his resurrection, he refused to answer their inquiry whether the time had arrived in which he would restore the kingdom to Israel, saying, "It is not for you to know the times and seasons"¹—i. e., the *precise* dates, "which the Father hath put in his own power." Acts 1: 7.

But though the exact day and hour were not to be

¹ "As Meyer observes, *καιρός* (translated seasons), is always a definite, limited space of time, and involves the idea of transitoriness." Alford. See also Tittman's N. T. Synonymes.

revealed, he still assured them that the event was *very near*. This declaration was made in many ways, and repeated with emphasis, and with many solemn admonitions that it should be remembered and watched for, making it one of the most certain and impressive teachings in the New Testament.

The very first public utterance that he made, after entering upon his ministry of preaching, was to repeat the announcement of his forerunner, John, in the wilderness, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 4: 17. The coming of that kingdom was the same thing as the coming of its king. So when giving his twelve apostles their commission, he says, "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 10: 7. He adds (verse 23), "Verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come."¹

Matt. 16: 27, 28. "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then shall he reward every man according to his deeds. Verily I say unto you, There be some of them that stand here which shall in no wise taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." In the corresponding passage in Mark it is, "till they see the kingdom of God come with power." And in Luke, "till they see the kingdom of God." It has been maintained by some that this prediction was fulfilled in the transfiguration, which occurred six days afterward. But this is a most unnatural

¹ "Jesus means neither more nor less than his second coming, which he announces even at this early stage." Meyer.

explanation. The purpose of it was to comfort his disciples under his announcement that he was about to be put to death, and their expectations of honor and place in his kingdom to be disappointed,—that they must deny themselves and take up the cross, as he had done, and be willing to lose life itself if they would preserve it. Yet he would not have them discouraged, for their Lord would, after his death, speedily return in the glory of his new kingdom, which would thenceforth be established in power. He would then be invested with the office of administering judgment and reward, and would repay his faithful servants for all they had done and suffered for his sake. Such is the manifest import of this grand promise, with which nothing can be more incongruous than the idea that they should be permitted merely to witness a change in his personal appearance, which would continue but an hour or two, and which they must be careful not to tell of. How absurd to call this a *rewarding* of every man according to his works! Besides, it seems little short of trifling to pretend that our Lord should so solemnly, and with the formula of weightiest emphasis, declare that there were some among all the persons standing about him who would not die within a week!¹

¹“ This declaration refers in its full meaning, certainly *not* to the *transfiguration* which follows, for that could in no sense (except that of being a foretaste; cf. Peter’s own allusion to it, 2 Pet. 1: 17, where he evidently treats it as such) be named the Son of man coming in his kingdom; and the expression ‘Some of them shall not taste of death’ indicates a distant event,—but to the *destruction of Jerusalem*, and the full manifestation

John 21: 21, 22. "Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" This is not, indeed, an express declaration that John should live till the time of his coming, but that meaning is implied in it.¹ The other apostles so understood it, and the prediction in this sense was verified, John, according to the testimony of all antiquity, having survived the destruction of Jerusalem. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. iii. 23. of the kingdom of Christ by the annihilation of the Jewish polity." Alford.

"It has reference to a gradual or progressive change, the institution of Christ's kingdom in the hearts of men and in society at large, of which protracted process the two salient points are the effusion of the Spirit on the day of pentecost, and the destruction of Jerusalem more than a quarter of a century later." Alexander.

"Assuredly the time of the second coming and of a righteous retribution is drawing near,—some of those present will still be living when it takes place." Meyer.

"Here the death of some who were present, as the longest lives, is assigned as the period of the Parousia." Olshausen.

"Some then present should live to see Christ enter upon, and finally establish, his mediatorial reign." Bloomfield.

"Some of those then present should live to see the foundation of a church which should acknowledge him as its king, and over which he would reign till the end of the world." Speaker's Com.

¹"The words must be accepted as expressing not merely what he could do, but what he intended to do." Trench; Studies, p. 189.

"By this Jesus means, as the solemn and absolute *erchomai* itself renders undoubted, his final historical Parousia, which he, according to the apprehension of all the evangelists and apostles, has promised will take place even before the passing away of the generation." Meyer.

Matt. 24: 34. "This generation shall not pass away till all these things be accomplished."¹ It has been said that the word "generation" does not necessarily denote a period equivalent to the average duration of those living at one time, but that it sometimes signifies a *race* or *kind*; so that the meaning here may be that, notwithstanding the threatened overthrow of the nation, the Jewish race should survive and continue till the end of time. But this is foreign to the whole scope of the passage. The topic under consideration was the time of the Parousia. Jesus likens it to the near approach of the summer after the budding of the spring, and immediately adds the words before us, as if to reiterate the idea in the strongest terms. Besides, though the English word, generation, may sometimes have the sense claimed, there is no instance in the New Testament of such use of the original word, *γενεά*. It occurs forty-two times, and invariably in its ordinary sense of the men of this age, or those now living.²

¹ I do not find this declaration quoted or referred to in any manner in "Premillennial Essays." It would be very interesting to know why it was omitted.

² "Notwithstanding the dissent of some, the phrase can only mean 'this very generation,' 'the race of men now living.'" Bloomfield.

"Ejus ætatis homines." Rosenmüller.

"It is neither more nor less than equivalent to our mode of expression when we say, 'There are those now born who will live to see these things fulfilled.'" Robinson. Bib. Sac.

"Not," says De Wette, 'this generation of the Jews, not this generation of the apostles (Paulus), but exclusively, the generation of men now living.' His explanation is doubtless correct." Stuart. Bib. Sac. IX. p. 455.

A novel, and we believe, wholly original way of evading the force of this declaration is advanced by Dr. Litch in his book entitled "Christ yet to come." He insists that the word "this" does not point to the generation contemporary with Christ, but to a far distant one described as long succeeding the fall of Jerusalem, when the "times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled." Luke 21: 24. Those times, he says, have not yet arrived, since Jerusalem is still trodden down by them. Our Saviour having mentioned that then remote period conceives of it as present, and says,—"*This* generation," meaning the one which he was speaking of, not *to*, "shall not pass," etc. A subterfuge so extraordinary, so destitute of all exegetical authority, and in such flat contradiction to that numerous class of passages, like Matt. 23: 36, which expressly point out the generation then living as the one which should see the fulfillment of the divine judgments upon Jerusalem, scarcely de-

"Unless we forge a meaning for the word in this place which is not only unexampled elsewhere, but directly contradictory to its essential meaning everywhere. we must understand our Lord as saying that the contemporary race or generation. i. e., those then living, should not pass away till all these prophecies should be accomplished." J. A. Alexander.

"We can understand nothing else by 'this generation' than the contemporaries of Jesus and his disciples." Keil.

"This generation of living men." Geikie.

"*Genea* (generation) is not used in the sense of nation in any one passage, either in the New Testament or of profane writers." Olshausen.

"The generation of persons then living with Christ." Denham, in Bib. Cyc.

"During the lifetime of the generation then living." Meyer.

serves notice, except as showing to what straits they are reduced who attempt to make Christ's directest testimony conform to their theories.

Matt. 26: 64. "Henceforth shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."—Luke 22: 69. "From henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God." In these passages the qualifying phrases of time are very explicit, not signifying, as the English "hereafter," some indefinite period in the future, but one commencing at that very moment;—immediately, forthwith.¹

John 16: 16. "A little while and ye behold me no more, and again a little while and ye shall see me; because I go unto the Father." This and similar phrases in the discourse can only have one import, as Alford terms it, "the great *Revisitation* in all its blessed progress."

These declarations of our Lord were accompanied by the most solemn warnings to his disciples to be continually prepared and watching for his coming, for it would take place suddenly and, to those not thus watching, unexpectedly. Matt. 24: 42-45; Mark 13: 33; Luke 21: 34-36. Of like import were the parables of the servant left in charge of a household (Matt. 24: 45-51); of the ten virgins (Matt.

¹"It is not to be understood in any other sense than that of *henceforth*, i. e., from the time of my impending death, through which I am to enter into my glory.—It can only be said of something that, beginning now, is *continued* henceforth." Meyer.

25: 1-13); and of the talents (Matt. 25: 14-29). It seems to me little else than mockery to address such admonitions to those who, upon the theory that the Parousia is still future, would go to their graves almost twenty centuries before the prediction would be accomplished.

SECTION II.

TESTIMONY OF PETER, JOHN, JAMES AND JUDE.

Such were the teachings of the Master himself. If, now, we turn to the Apostles whom he commissioned to complete the sacred volume, we find as one of the most conspicuous facts that they had understood him as affirming the near approach of the Parousia; that they frequently spoke of it, and derived from it their most constant incitements to fidelity, and their most precious consolations and hopes.

Two of those who inquired concerning it on the Mount of Olives were Peter and John, which are the only ones of the four whose words have been preserved to us in writing. A simple citation of their language will strikingly illustrate how habitually and how fondly they recurred to the subject.

Acts 2: 16. "This is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall be in the last days,"¹ etc. Verse 20. "The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the

¹ "This denotes the last days of the pre-Messianic period, the days immediately preceding the erection of the Messiah's kingdom, which according to the N. T. view could not but take place by means of the speedily expected Parousia of Christ." Meyer.

day of the Lord come, that great and notable day." This passage is very valuable as giving us an inspired explanation of this prophetic imagery. It does not mean physical changes in the heavens, but those great moral events which disclose the power of God as clearly as physical phenomena would.

Acts 3: 19. "Repent ye therefore,—that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and—that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you.—Until the times of restoration of all things."¹

1 Pet. 1: 5. "Who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

1 Pet. 1: 7. "Might be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

1 Pet. 1: 13. "Set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought² unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 4: 5. "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead."

1 Pet. 4: 7. "But the end of all things is at hand."³

¹"Such times as shall precede the Parousia, and by the emergence of which it is conditioned that the Parousia shall ensue." Meyer.

²Greek, is being brought. Rev. Ver. The original "expresses the near impending of the event spoken of; q. d., which is even now bearing down upon you." Alford.

³"This seems to be the same thing as the judgment of the quick and the dead, which the Lord was ready to enter on,—the judgment the time for which was come." Dr. John Brown. Exp. Dis.

1 Pet. 4: 13. "That at the revelation of his glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy."

1 Pet. 4: 17. "For the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God." (Gr. It is the time of the beginning of the judgment).

1 Pet. 5: 1. "A partaker of the glory that shall be (Gr. is about to be) revealed."

1 Pet. 5: 4. "And when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory."¹

2 Pet. 1: 16. "We made known to you the power and coming (Gr. Parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Pet. 3: 10-12. "The day of the Lord will come as a thief.—Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring (Gr. hastening) the coming (Gr. Parousia) of the day of God," etc.

1 John 2: 18. "It is the last time."²

1 John 2: 28. "Abide in him, that if he shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." (Gr. in his Parousia.)

1 John 3: 2. "We know that if he shall be manifested we shall be like him, for we shall see him even as he is."

1 John 4: 17. "That we may have boldness in the day of judgment."

¹"St. Peter regarded the coming of the Lord as likely to occur in the lifetime of his readers." Alford.

²"Verse 28 shows that it is the coming of the Lord which is before the mind of the apostle." Alford.

Rev. 1: 1, 3. "The things which must shortly come to pass.—The time is at hand."

Rev. 2: 16. "I come unto thee quickly."

Rev. 2: 25. "Hold fast till I come."

Rev. 3: 3, 20. "I will come as a thief.—Behold I stand at the door and knock."

Rev. 22: 12. "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me."

In this connection I will cite also the testimony of James and Jude, who though not of the twelve, were reckoned as the brothers of our Lord (Mark 6: 3), and were held in the highest repute among the earliest churches.

James 5: 3. "Ye have laid up your treasure in the last days."¹

James 5: 7, 8, 9. "Be patient, brethren, until the coming (Parousia) of the Lord. The coming (Parousia) of the Lord is at hand—Behold the Judge standeth before the doors."

Jude 24. "Unto him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy."

SECTION III.

THE TESTIMONY OF PAUL.

In citing the abundant testimony of this great apostle, who though not with those who heard our Lord's words on the Mount of Olives, yet received the gospel which he preached by direct revelation

¹ "The last days before the coming of the Lord." Alford.

(Gal. 1: 12), we begin with his address to the Athenians on Mars Hill, when he first made known to them the name and offices of the Messiah.

Acts 17: 31. "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained." Whether this word, *judge*, be taken in the strictly judicial sense or in the kindred one of *ruling*, is not essential. The Messianic reign, as we have seen, embraced both ideas. And the apostle here assures his audience that that period of judicial administration was just about to begin. The phrase "he will judge"—*μέλλει κρίναι*—is not a simple future, but one of emphasis, meaning that the act is speedily to take place.¹

The same truth is repeatedly affirmed in his epistles, the earliest of which—1 Thessalonians—should be read in connection with Acts 17: 1-10, as showing the circumstances attending the founding of the Thessalonian church. The great theme of his preaching there had been the speedy coming of Christ to establish his kingdom among men. This appears from the complaint made by his enemies to the Roman authorities, that he and his followers were turning the world upside down—"saying that there is *another king*, one Jesus." With this agrees his own statement (1 Thess. 1: 9, 10). "Macedonia and Achaia . . . report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols to serve a living and

¹ "Paul means the Messianic judgment, and that as not remotely impending." Meyer.

true God, and to *wait for his Son from heaven*." That Jesus was the appointed King of men, and that he was about to come from heaven to assume his throne, are plainly the leading topics thus indicated. We do not wonder that, with backs yet bleeding from the scourging they had suffered at Philippi, Paul and his companion Silas should have taught thus. They made Christ's own words in Matt. 16 : 24-28 their text, and their preaching, as he says, and as it well might be from an eloquence so fired and so illustrated, "was in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." (Ch. 1 : 5). From the seed sown in that three weeks' ministry sprang up a church whose faith and zeal won from him the most honorable commendation, and were, as he assures them, known and certified to throughout all Greece. Ch. 1 : 8.¹

With this key-note of his preaching harmonize all the allusions to the same subject with which the two epistles to this church abound.

1 Thess. 2 : 19. "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye before our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (Gr. his *Parousia*).

1 Thess. 3 : 13. "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and

¹"The great burden of his message to them was the approaching coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus."—Alford.

"If we were asked for the distinguishing characteristic of the first Christians of Thessalonica, we should point to their overwhelming sense of the nearness of the second advent." Howson. *Life and Epp.* I. p. 327.

Father, at the coming (Parousia) of our Lord Jesus with all his saints."

1 Thess. 4: 15. "We that are alive, that are left unto the coming (Parousia) of the Lord."¹

1 Thess. 4: 17. "Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds," etc.²

1 Thess. 5: 2. "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

1 Thess. 5: 23. "May your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming (Parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thess. 1: 7. "And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven."

¹"Then beyond question he himself expected to be alive, together with the majority of those to whom he was writing, at the Lord's coming." Alford. This author styles the usual explanation that by "we the living," is meant "such as should be alive at that day," an evasion, and insists that in the word *we* "Paul includes his readers and himself. That this *was* his expectation we know from other passages, especially from 2 Cor. 5: 1-10."

"Certainly, the proceeding of the older interpreters who thought Paul spoke in the plural only conversationally, without really meaning to say that they themselves, *he and his readers*, might be still living at the occurrence of that catastrophe, is decidedly to be rejected." Olshausen.

²"Here Paul evidently reckons himself among those of whom he considers it possible, and a thing to be desired and hoped for, that they may live to witness the advent. The strange evasions by means of which the fathers and others sought to make out that Paul nevertheless is not speaking of himself, are justly set aside by Lünemann." Auberlen, in Lange's Com.

2 Thess. 2: 1-12. This passage so often quoted to disprove the speedy coming of Christ, will receive distinct notice hereafter.

2 Thess. 3: 5. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ."

The other epistles of Paul we note in their usual order.

Rom. 8: 18. "The sufferings of this present time¹ are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed toward us." (Gr. is about to be revealed).

Rom. 13: 11, 12. "And this, knowing the season, that now it is high time for you to awake out of sleep; for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand."²

¹ "The period then current which was to end with the approaching Parousia, assumed as near in 13: 11, 12; 1 Thess. 4: 17; 1 Cor. 7: 29; and in the entire N. T." Meyer.

² "A fair exegesis of this passage can hardly fail to recognize the fact that the apostle here as well as elsewhere (1 Thess. 4: 17; 1 Cor. 15: 51), speaks of the coming of the Lord as rapidly approaching." Alford.

"Most modern German commentators defend this reference. Olshausen, DeWette, Philippi, Meyer, and others, think no other view in the least tenable; and Dr. Lange, while careful to guard against extreme theories on this point, denies the reference to eternal blessedness, and admits that the Parousia is intended. The opinion gains ground among Anglo-Saxon exegetes." Riddle, in Lange's Com.

"The Messianic salvation, namely in its completion, as introduced by the Parousia which Paul along with the whole apostolical church regarded as near, always drawing nearer, and setting in even before the decease of the generation." Meyer.

1 Cor. 1: 7-8. "Ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye be unprovable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." The meaning is that the Corinthians were not inferior to any other church in their ardent and waiting expectation of the approaching Parousia.¹

1 Cor. 3: 13. "Each man's work shall be made manifest; for the day² shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire." Literally, "It—the day—is being manifested in fire." The verb is in the present tense, as if denoting an event now in progress or just about to occur.

1 Cor. 4: 5, "Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts." An apparent allusion to the work of the Revealer predicted in Malachi 3: 2-5.

1 Cor. 5: 2. "Deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

1 Cor. 7: 29. "But this I say, brethren, the time is shortened," etc.³

¹ "It may be asked, Were the Corinthians looking for Christ's second advent as an event likely to occur in their day, and which some of them might be expected to witness? This question must be answered in the affirmative." Poor, in Lange's Com.

² "The day of the Parousia." Meyer.

³ Alford translates this, "The time that remains is short, — literally, the time is shortened henceforth;" i. e., the interval

1 Cor. 10: 11. "They are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world (ends of the ages) are come."¹

1 Cor. 11: 26. "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." This passage is relied upon by many as showing that the Parousia is still future, else our practice of observing the Supper should cease. This will be considered hereafter.²

1 Cor. 15: 23. "Christ the first fruits; then they that are Christ's at his coming." (Gr. in his Parousia).

1 Cor. 15: 51, 52. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twink-

between now and the coming of the Lord has arrived at an extremely contracted period."

"The 'time' is not to be taken for the earthly lifetime of individuals; the context rather points to the period of time from thence onward until the second advent." Kling in Lange's Com.

"The space of time subsisting up to the Parousia." Meyer.

¹ "Upon the supposition of the Parousia being close at hand, the last times of the world were now come." Meyer.

² "The apostle was convinced that the Parousia was close at hand, and therefore future generations could not have been present to his mind in writing thus; but to *apply* his words to them is historically necessary and right.—After the Parousia, the Lord himself is here." Meyer.

³ "The showing forth is addressed directly to the Corinthians, not to them and all succeeding Christians; the apostle regarding the coming of the Lord as near at hand, in *his own* time." Alford.

ling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound," etc.¹

1 Cor. 16: 25. "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema. Maranatha." i. e., the Lord cometh.²

2 Cor. 1: 13, 14. "I hope ye will acknowledge unto the end.³—We are your glorying, even as ye also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus."⁴

2 Cor. 4: 14. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you."⁵

¹"We all, viz., as in 1 Thess. 4: 15, who are alive and remain unto the Parousia of the Lord, in which number the apostle firmly believed that he himself should be." Alford.

"To take the term 'we' as a sort of generalization by which he did not intend literally to denote himself and his contemporaries, but only those living at the time of the advent, and who belonged to an entirely different period, and so, as equivalent to 'we Christians,' i. e., those who shall then be alive, is entirely arbitrary. It is unquestionable that the apostle, although opposed to all fanciful expectations and designations of time, regarded the second advent as near and hoped to survive it." Kling.

"The subject of (these verbs) must be Paul himself, and the whole of those who like him shall yet witness the Parousia." Meyer.

²"The thought, 'The Lord comes!' is calculated to heighten the force of the preceding thought; Be ye quickly converted, for the time of decision is near at hand!" Olshausen.

"Energetic reference to the Parousia.—Paul sees the near and certain Parousia as if already begun, and exclaims like a prophet beholding it in vision, '*Our Lord is here!*'"

³"Till the Parousia." Meyer.

⁴"On the day of the Parousia." Meyer.

⁵"Paul indeed expected that he himself and most of his

2 Cor. 5: 1. "If the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God."¹

Gal. 1: 4. "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world."²

Eph. 2: 7. "That in the ages to come³ he might show the exceeding riches of his grace."

Phil. 1: 6. "He which began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ."⁴

Phil. 1: 10. "That ye may be sincere and void of offense unto the day of Christ."

readers would live to see the Parousia, but the possibility of meeting death in the deadly persecutions was always and even now before his mind, and out of this case conceived as possible, which subsequently he for the time being even posits as a certainty (Acts 20: 25), he expresses here, in presence of his eventual death, his triumphant consciousness that 'he which raised up,' etc. Meyer.

¹"The feeling expressed in these verses was one most natural to those who, like the apostles, regarded the coming of the Lord as near, and conceived the possibility of their living to behold it." Alford.

"Paul here supposes the case, the actual occurrence of which however, is left quite indefinite by *ἐάν* (if) of his not living to see the Parousia. It is true that he was convinced for himself that he would live to see it (1 Cor. 15: 51), but the opposite still remained to him a possible case." Meyer.

²"That is, the time immediately preceding the Parousia. With his idea of the nearness of the Parousia, Paul conceived this period as having then already begun, although its full development was yet in reserve." Meyer.

³"The time of Christ's perfect triumph over evil, always contemplated in the N. T., as near at hand." Con. and How.

⁴"This assumes the nearness of the coming of the Lord." Alford.

"This presupposes the nearness of the Parousia, as everywhere in the N. T., and especially in Paul's writings." Meyer.

Phil. 2: 16. "That I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ."

Phil. 3: 20. "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."¹

Phil. 4: 5. "The Lord is at hand."²

Col. 3: 4. "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory."

1 Tim. 6: 14. "Keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Tim. 1: 12. "He is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day."

2 Tim. 1: 18. "The Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day."

2 Tim. 4: 1. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall (Gr. is about to) judge the quick and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom."

2 Tim. 4: 8. "There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day, and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."

2 Tim. 4: 18. "The Lord will save me unto his heavenly kingdom."

Titus 2: 13. "Looking for the blessed hope and

¹ "The words assume, as St. Paul always does when speaking incidentally, the 'we' surviving to witness the coming of the Lord." Alford.

² "Points to the nearness of Christ's Parousia." Meyer.

appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Heb. 3: 6. "If we hold fast our boldness, and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end."

Heb. 3: 14. "If we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end."¹

Heb. 6: 11. "Unto the fullness of hope even to the end."

Heb. 9: 26. "Now once, at the end of the ages, hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."²

Heb. 9: 28. "Christ shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation."

Heb. 10: 25. "And so much the more as ye see the day drawing nigh."³

Heb. 10: 37. "For yet a very little while, he that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry." The expression in the original is very peculiar. The words translated "a little while" (*μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον*) are a sort of double superlative, meaning the *smallest possible time*. Alford translates them "a little

¹ "The end thought of is not the death of each individual, but the coming of the Lord, which is constantly called by this name." Alford.

² "The first Christians universally spoke of the second coming of the Lord as close at hand." Alford.

³ "The shortest of all designations of the Lord's coming," Alford.

"The day of Christ's coming was seen approaching at this time by the threatening prelude of the great Jewish war wherein he came to judge that nation." Con. and How.

little while.”¹ He thinks that Paul had in his mind a similar expression in the Septuagint of Isa. 26: 20, which in our version is rendered “for a little moment.” Nothing could express more forcibly the idea of the speediness of the event referred to. Yet, as if that were not enough, the same thing is repeated in the negative form, “and shall not tarry.”

Heb. 12: 28. “Wherefore receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace,” etc.²

SECTION IV.

THE TESTIMONY WEIGHED.

I have thus cited or referred to above ninety instances in which our Lord and his apostles spoke directly or indirectly of the time of that great period named the Parousia. The casual reader, not familiar with the customary phraseology of the apostolic age, may not have always recognized the allusion to that period, but a careful study of the passages will not leave any doubt on that point. What now is the conclusion to which they bring us?

1. Let it be noted that in none of these passages nor in any other of either Testament is there any affirmation that the Parousia was *distant*. Nearly two thousand years have passed since that time, and if the Parousia is still future, it must then have been very far off,—how much more than two thousand

¹ “A little while, how little, how little!” Tregelles.

² “The passage has respect to the changes which would be introduced by the coming of the Messiah and the new dispensation which he would commence.” Stuart.

years we cannot say. Is it not remarkable that, if this were so, no intimation of that fact should at any time have been made? Is it not wonderful that among nearly one hundred allusions to the event and the time when it was expected, not one of them should have hinted at the *truth*,—if such *was* the truth? Is it not passing strange that in stating their expectations and hopes, and urging the powerful motives which centered in that event, not one should have uttered a word, or betrayed the trace of an impression in his mind, that the time was at least twenty centuries distant? Nay, take this assumed fact—say of twenty centuries—and carry it back and lay it alongside the utterances quoted, as a supposed explanation of what their authors meant:—“at hand,” “before some standing here taste of death,” “this generation,” “from now,” “quickly,” “the time is short,” “we who are alive, that are left,” “a little little while,” etc. Is *that*, I cannot help asking, a proper way of understanding inspired words? I need not ask the learned only; I appeal to every plain man of common sense. Do these phrases mean twenty centuries or more? *Can* they mean that by any reasonable interpretation? Had we been among the hearers of our Lord or of the apostles, could we have possibly understood their words in such a meaning?

2. The testimonies I have considered are, most of them, expressed in *simple, plain words*. They are not clothed in figurative language or presented only through pictures and symbols, like many others used

in prophecy. "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." "Some of them that stand here shall in no wise taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." "The Parousia of the Lord is at hand." "I come quickly." "The Lord is at hand." "Yet a very little while, he that cometh shall come and shall not tarry," etc. Nothing can be more direct, literal, positive. Mathematical terms are not less ambiguous. Says Prof. Reuss, "All these representations are clear and simple; they have nothing equivocal about them; there is not a word to suggest that there is any hidden meaning, any mental reservation, reducing their value merely to that of parable or figure. It is evident that the narrators, who serve as our guides, took every word literally and had not a shadow of doubt in reference to the matter."¹ Why then should we not receive them in the same way?

3. Observe, also, how these testimonies are *cumulative*. They are not given by a single one of the sacred writers only, but by them all. They are affirmed alike by the Master and the disciples. They cannot be attributed to the peculiar experience or training of any one, but to the common inspiration and the common hopes of all. Neither are they confined to a single utterance, as is true, for instance, of Paul's declaration respecting the "delivering up of the kingdom." (1 Cor. 15: 24-28). That solitary expression of one apostle has been sufficient to shape

¹Hist. Ch. Theology, p. 214.

our accepted theology of Christ's kingdom on a matter of infinitely greater moment than the mere *time* of its beginning, viz., its absolute completion and end. Should not a hundred times as many utterances, in terms often far less doubtful, suffice to place beyond doubt, that time? Nor, yet again, was this teaching addressed to any one church or class of churches, as adapted to their special needs,—as for instance, to the Jewish rather than the Gentile churches, whom it might be supposed it would specially concern. James and Peter taught it to “the twelve tribes” and “the strangers” scattered abroad, and Paul, to the mixed churches in Rome and Corinth and Macedonia and Asia Minor. It is the one distinctive theme of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and of the Epistles and Apocalypse addressed to the seven churches. Whether we regard the number, the universality, or the conspicuousness of these teachings, we are compelled to feel that no one truth of Christianity, next to that of the cross itself, has been more abundantly or indisputably affirmed to us than this of the speediness of the Parousia.

4. It is certain that *those who heard the words* of our Lord on the subject *understood him* as teaching the near approach of the Parousia; that they themselves expected it; and, of course, that when they referred to it they meant to be understood in the same way. This is now conceded by nearly all commentators. The following statements may be added to those already cited in connection with the particular

passages. Says Prof. Stuart, "Tholuck and most of the late commentators in Germany suppose that the apostles expected the speedy advent upon earth a second time." Com. on Rom. 13: 11. "The Messianic kingdom begins by means of the second coming of Christ which Paul regarded near." Meyer. "All the writers of the New Testament consider Christ's advent as near; in fact, the whole doctrine would not have the slightest practical significance unless the longing after the second coming of Christ were each moment alive, and therefore continually deemed possible." Olshausen, on 1 Thess. 4: 15. "That St. John, like the other apostles, expected the coming of Christ as nigh at hand is a certain fact." Ebrard, on 1 John. "All the apostolic exhortations and consolations are so clearly connected with the prospect of the personal return of the Lord, that whosoever contradicts this last thereby takes away the roof and cornice from the structure of the apostolic theology." Van Oosterzee. Hist. II. p. 581. "Certainly the apostles do all of them express often enough the expectation of the coming as near,—a living hope and longing expectation." Auberlen in Lange's Com. 1 Thess. 4: 17.—There can be but one reasonable conclusion from these facts. For the apostles were *inspired* men, expressly commissioned to teach what they had received from the Lord. The language I have cited from them was written under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who was promised to "teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them."

John 14 : 26. If they, so taught and so guided, understood that the Parousia was at hand, then we must so understand it, or relinquish the belief of their inspiration altogether.¹

5. The *primitive Christians*, who had themselves heard the preaching of Christ and his apostles, understood them as teaching the near approach of the Parousia. That such was the case with the church in Thessalonica is notorious. "As matter of fact," says Alford, "The apostles and ancient Christians did continue to expect the Lord's coming after that generation had passed away."—"This constant expectation of our Lord's coming, when he shall be revealed in his glory unto all, is one of the characteristic features of primitive Christianity." Kling, in Lange's Com., 1 Cor. 1 : 7. Gibbon, whose testimony as an historian on this point need not be questioned, says, "In the primitive church * * * it was universally believed that the end of the world and the kingdom of heaven were at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the apostles; the tradition of it had been preserved by their earliest disciples, and those who understood in their literal sense the discourses of Christ himself were obliged to expect the second and glo-

¹"What St. Paul may have meant by his expressions is a question open to the widest and freest discussion; but that what he did mean—is truth for us to receive, not opinion for us to canvass, is a position, the holding or rejection of which might be very simply and strictly shown to constitute the difference between one who receives and one who repudiates Christian revelation itself." Alford, Proleg. on 2 Thess., p. 65.

rious coming of the Son of man in the clouds before that generation was totally extinguished which had beheld his humble condition upon earth, and which might still be witness of the calamities of the Jews under Vespasian or Hadrian." Dec. and Fall, Ch. XV.

I ask, then, how could such an opinion have obtained such an acceptance if it had not in fact been taught by Christ and the apostles? Error might, indeed, have sprung up here and there in various ways, but whence this *universal* belief? It is often alleged that Paul wrote the second Epistle to the Thessalonians to correct that opinion, and declare authoritatively that the Parousia was not "at hand." If so, why had not the correction proved effective, both among the Thessalonians and elsewhere?—for, from the very earliest date, this epistle was received as of undoubted inspiration in all the churches. Nay, why did he himself ever after repeat in all his epistles the same declarations, so that from these alone, despite the alleged "correction," the doctrine would stand on the firmest foundations? Surely an honest man would not persist in asserting and reasserting, in every form of utterance, what he had written a whole epistle to deny. And when we find that everywhere, among all those who had received his epistles, the belief in the nearness of the Parousia prevailed, can it be doubted that it was because they regarded themselves as so taught? The whole Christian church could not have been brought to receive as one of its fundamental articles of faith a doctrine which had not come to them from the very fountain of all authority.

6. That the declarations of our Lord and the apostles, which I have cited, mean what they seem to mean as to the near approach of the Parousia is evident *from the connection in which they stand, and the purposes for which they were uttered.* That doctrine is rarely or never advanced in the way of a general didactic statement, but always as having an important bearing for encouragement, incitement, or warning, on some present exigency, in which the very stress of the passage lies in the fact that the Parousia is *near*. When Christ told his disciples that he would come in the glory of his Father to reward every man according to his works, and added, that some of them should not taste death till they had seen it,—what was it but to console them with the prospect of a *speedy* compensation for their sufferings? Take away this element of speediness, and the promise is robbed of its meaning. So with waiting and watching for his coming. I submit that it is impossible for any person to be in such an attitude of expectancy toward any event which is indefinitely distant. Let the reader try it for himself. Let him conceive of any great occurrence, however full of weal or woe, that is to happen two thousand years hence, and see if he can, by any practice upon himself, come into such a state that he can truly say that he is waiting or looking for it, or expecting it. How could Paul be confident that he who had begun a good work in the Philippians would perform it for twenty centuries to come? What would be the force of such admonitions as, “Let your modera-

tion be known to all men; the Lord will come two thousand years after you are all dead"? "Murmur not one against another that ye be not judged; the Judge, some ages hence, *will* stand at the door"? "The end of all things is *far off*; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer"?

I insist that it is this very element of *nearness* which imparts to this entire body of eschatological utterances their significance. They were not given to be dry didactics about the future, but solemn warnings, or inspirations to courage, hope, and joy, for present use. To be such they must be drawn from events not very far remote. Such is the nature of man that he is and can be but feebly impressed by what is far distant in space or time. Olshausen clearly recognizes this fact. "Had the Redeemer," he observes, "intended to say that his coming was yet very far distant, such a statement would have entirely destroyed the ethical import of the prophecy, viz.: the incitement to watchfulness which it was designed to produce." Without it, "the whole doctrine would not have the slightest practical significance."¹ This is certainly true, but we cannot admit the monstrous inference he derives from it, that our Lord purposely used language calculated to mislead his disciples for the sake of that influence. Why did not the learned author see that the very alternative he states is a proof that the event was *not* far distant? I believe that it is just this, or at least it is one of the causes, which have made the

¹ Com. Matt. 24: 36.

“gospel of the kingdom” so ineffective in modern times, compared with what it was in the time of the apostles. Let the Parousia, as a *now existing fact*, be preached with as much earnestness as they preached it as an *anticipated* fact,—in other words, that Christ *has* come, that he *is now* upon the throne of his kingdom, ruling, judging and rewarding men according to their works, with his mighty angels attending him to do his will, and by the new-creating energy of his providence and Spirit making “all things new,”—and I believe that the events witnessed on the day of pentecost, and even greater, would speedily follow.

SECTION V.

EVASIONS.

But this great body of Scripture utterances, so numerous, so direct, and apparently so conclusive in their import, are, by very many, not received in that apparent import. They do not look upon them as teaching that the Parousia was then near, though not a few, with a flexibility of logic which seems to me most marvelous, insist that the very same utterances teach that it is *now* near. Without impeaching the sincerity or intelligence of either class, it is proper to examine the reasons adduced by them for refusing their assent to our conclusions.

1. One of the easiest and cheapest of all methods is to throw over the whole, as a universal extinguisher of precision in prophetic matters, the words of Peter (2 Pet. 3: 8), quoted from the Psalm of

Moses, "*One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" That is to say, all declarations to the effect that the Parousia is nigh at hand, within this generation, before some present shall taste of death, etc., are to be taken not in their ordinary human sense, but as understood only by Him who uses a day and a millennium as equal to each other. Thus (Mill. Essays, p. 310), "When the voice sounds from the celestial city, 'Surely, I come quickly,' it is counting time as it is reckoned by Him with whom a thousand years are as one day; and according to the chronology of heaven not two days have yet passed since the risen Jesus, with uplifted hands in the act of priestly blessing, ascended from the Mount of Olives." So Bengel, "God's æon-measure, as it may be called, differs from the hour-measure of mortals. Its index marks all hours at the same time, both in supreme activity and in supreme rest. On it time passes neither slower nor swifter than suits him and his divine plan."¹

Now, of course, this language as contrasting human transitoriness with God's eternity is not to be questioned. When applied to his own being or to his great plan of things, it is true and impressive. If we ask why he did not sooner create the world, or why he waited four thousand years before giving to it a

¹ "Dei æonologium (sic appellare liceat) differt ab horologis mortalium. Illius gnomon omnes horas simul indicat, in summa actione et in summa quiete. Ei nec tardius nec celerius labuntur tempora, quam ipsi, et œconomiz ejus aptum sit." Quoted by Alford on 2 Pet. 3: 8.

Saviour, or why after almost two thousand more he has not made that Saviour known to all men, the answer is that he alone is the judge of the proper times for doing his own work. Sooner and later are terms not applicable to him whose working day is eternity. What seems delay to men is no evidence of "slackness" in carrying out plans whose only metes are the dictates of infinite wisdom.

But when God, for men's instruction, is pleased to take from his *æonologium* the dates of his proposed acts and set them before us in the terms of our own *horologium*,—in other words, tell us in our human language *when* he will perform them, then is that language as definite as when similarly used among ourselves. Else, for what reason is it done? Why have we a hundred times repeated the declaration that the event so ardently desired should occur within the passing generation, if it was not to induce a belief of that very fact? When our Saviour affirmed it with a "verily" (Matt. 24: 34), what could he have intended his disciples to understand by it but just what they *did* understand? Suppose he had added in terms, "I mean by this not the human sense of the words, but the secret, ineffable sense known only to God; it will be in this generation, but by generation you must understand *x y z!*" Would he not have seemed to them as one that mocked? ¹

The truth is, that the proposed mode of interpret-

¹ "He who speaks to men must speak according to human conceptions, or else state that he has not done so." Heng. Christ. III. p. 270.

ing prophetic measures of time is contrary to the universal usage of the Scriptures. It may indeed be laid down as a canon, that whenever prophecy uses designations of time, whether numerically exact, or as embraced within limits somewhat indefinite yet conveying under those limits a definite idea, its fulfillment is always to be sought according to the plain meaning of the terms. Thus the word "generation" is not a precise period; it permits a possible variation of half-a-dozen or so years; yet as a whole the idea conveyed by it within that variability is certain. It cannot mean two thousand years, nor two hundred. So the words "quickly," "in a little while," etc., while admitting of some flexibility, are as plain of import as any words in the language. If I promise to pay a debt "soon," I may not indeed be held by it to that very day, possibly not even that week, but I am held to do it within a period which common sense pronounces brief. I may *not* under the plea of indefiniteness postpone it till some far-off future. And thus, whether in the more or less exact terms of time, whenever prophecy tells us to look for its fulfillment, we find invariably that it has been so fulfilled. Who that believes the Mosaic narrative of the deluge doubts that it took place within the hundred and twenty years announced to Noah (Gen. 6: 3)? Who questions that Abraham's descendants were in Egypt four hundred years, according to the prophecy (Gen. 15: 13)? So the three days of the chief butler and chief baker in prison, and the seven years of plenty and famine under Joseph; the sev-

enty years of the captivity predicted by Jeremiah (Dan. 9: 2); the seventy *sevens* (weeks) of Daniel before the cutting off of the Messiah (9: 24); Christ's own declaration that he would rise from the dead on the third day (Matt. 17: 23); the promise to Simeon that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ (Luke 1: 26); the predicted overthrow of the temple, etc. Who ever thinks of calling a day a thousand years in such instances? Take the single instance of Christ's resurrection. Suppose that he had not risen from the grave on the third literal day, where would our Christianity have been? Would it suffice to assure his triumphant enemies, two thousand years afterward, that his words would yet come true; that the "three days" were to be reckoned not in their plain meaning, but "according to the chronology of heaven," and that "not *two days* have yet passed"? How plain is it that the common sense of mankind could not have been thus insulted with impunity; that such a trifling with one of the corner stones of historic Christianity is fatal to the entire structure?

2. A second mode of evading the obvious meaning of these numerous passages is by virtually *impeaching their credibility*. This is done while conceding that the language itself is explicit,—so explicit indeed, that it cannot be escaped in any other way.

Some say that the apostles were *mistaken*. Thus Mr. Barnes: "I do not know that the proper doctrine of inspiration suffers if we admit that the apos-

tles were ignorant of the exact time when the world would close, or even that in regard to the precise period when that would take place *they might be in error.*"¹ So Prof. G. P. Fisher: "This expectation [of the second coming] is expressed by all the apostles in terms which fairly admit of no other interpretation.—To put any other construction on these passages, as if the Parousia to which they refer was anything else than the Second Advent of the Lord to judgment, would introduce a dangerous license in interpretation, and one which might be employed to subvert the principal doctrines of the Christian system"² And yet he adds, "Under the general expectation of the apostles, *mistaken though it might prove to be in the one particular of time*, there lay a fundamental truth." And if we ask concerning our Lord himself, whether he was mistaken also, we find the Professor not hesitating to say, "It is not strange that this expectation, which appears so distinctly and frequently in the Epistles, should tinge the phraseology in which the evangelists record the prophetic utterances of Jesus. That a verbal exactitude belongs always to these reports of the Saviour's teachings is claimed by no intelligent person who has compared the Gospels with one another. Jesus taught in the Aramaic dialect; his teaching was transmitted orally for a time, before it was embodied in written form; his sayings are often condensed by the evangelists, and given in an order not correspond-

¹ *Com.* 1 Cor. 15: 50.

² *Beginnings of Christianity*, p. 366.

ing precisely to that in which they were uttered." Is *this*, then, we cannot help asking, the only way of escaping the force of this Scripture testimony? *Inspired men* mistaken! And that not about matters outside of religion, but about the very things they were commissioned to teach, and which they made the "roof and cornice" of their theology! Christ's language *tinged* with the *mistaken* expectations of his reporters; its real meaning obscured under the Aramaic dialect, and by oral transmissions and condensations so modified that verbal exactitude does not always belong to it! The suggestion shocks all our ideas of inspiration. The Word on which we are to build our faith is no longer a rock, but a treacherous quicksand! If we may thus evade the force of Christ's sayings about the Parousia, why not about the need of the new birth, and the punishment of the wicked, and numerous other truths which many would be very glad to get rid of?

3. Not a few writers, hesitating apparently to say outright that Paul was mistaken, seek to weaken the force of his statements by intimating that they are found chiefly in his *earlier Epistles*, as if the growing wisdom of his later years had corrected, or at least abated, the fondness of his former expectations. Says Olshausen, "Paul seems in later times not only to give up the hope of living to see Christ's second coming himself (compare Phil. 1: 23 with 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17), but also to have dwelt less in his teaching on the near approach of the outward kingdom of God, and to have presented in stronger relief

its spiritual aspects." So Alford: "I find in the course of St. Paul's Epistles that expressions which occur in the earlier ones, and seem to indicate expectations of his almost immediate coming, are gradually modified, disappear altogether from the Epistles of the imprisonment, and instead of them are found others speaking in a very different strain of dissolving and being with Christ, and passing through death and the resurrection in the latest Epistles."¹ Granting this, what then? Was not Paul as truly inspired when he wrote the earlier as the later Epistles? He must have been over fifty years old when the very first (1 Thess.), was written; he had been preaching the gospel nearly or quite twenty years; shall his words be discredited because of either youth or inexperience? Are not the Epistles to the Thessalonians as much the word of God as that to the Philippians? Even if he had said less of the Parousia in his later than in the earlier years, does it follow that it was because his opinion was different? I have suggested a special reason why he made the subject so prominent at Thessalonica, and that is enough to account fully for any such supposed difference between these and the later Epistles. Besides, I question not only the hypothesis, but the alleged fact itself. If Paul's imprisonment was in A.D. 62-65, then the later Epistles were those addressed to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, and latest of all to Timothy and Titus. But where in all his writings are there stronger ex-

¹Proleg. 1 Thess.

pressions of his hope and expectation than in Phil. 4: 5; Col. 3: 4; 2 Tim. 4: 1, 8, 18; Titus 2: 13? Equally decided are the passages quoted from the Hebrews, though both Alford and Olshausen doubt the Pauline authorship of that Epistle.

4. More reprehensible even than these is the opinion avowed by Olshausen that our Lord *purposely* used language calculated to mislead his hearers, for the sake of the moral effect to be thus gained. The Parousia, though not to occur for more than sixty generations, "in its great leading events is immediately associated with the present, and thus great impressiveness is given to the entire portraiture *without its treading too closely upon the truth.*" "Had the Redeemer intended to say that his coming was yet very distant"—which according to this author's view was the exact truth,—“such a statement would have entirely destroyed the ethical import of the prophecy, viz., the incitement to watchfulness which it was designed to produce; and if, on the other hand, he had so expressed himself as to say nothing at all about the time when these things would come to pass, this total silence would have been no less paralyzing in its influence. But the representation given by the Lord was so framed as to act in a two-fold way, first, to keep before the mind the constant possibility of his coming, and secondly, to show the impossibility of fixing upon a precise period.”¹ That is to say, neither silence nor the exact truth would have had the best “ethical influ-

¹ Com. Matt. 24: 36.

ence"; so our Lord purposely used ambiguous and misleading words for the sake of inciting his disciples to watchfulness! What, I cannot help asking, must be the straits of a theory which makes necessary so shocking an invention as this!

5. Schott, Bloomfield, and others seek to solve the difficulty by a "middle course," supposing that Paul did not intend to teach that the near approach of the Parousia was *certain*, but only *possible*. "By speaking obscurely, he doubtless meant to express no certain expectation on the subject; for though he was himself inclined to think that some then alive should witness the coming of Christ, or at least, that it was not far distant, yet he was well aware that it was not permitted to him to know the times and the seasons which the Father had reserved to himself; so we find that he sometimes refutes those who expected the Lord's return to be close at hand and gladly anticipated it. And as the apostle at the time when he wrote this Epistle was not yet advanced in life, he might very well entertain the opinion that he should *perhaps* live to that day." Bloomfield. 1 Thess. 4: 15. Surely this is to empty the solemn admonitory words of Paul of half their meaning. The Parousia only *may* be near; which implies, of course, that it may *not*. The "ethical" benefit of the expectation may be gained, and at the same time his credit as a prophet will be saved if it turns out to be a mistake! Does the Holy Spirit guide men into such double dealing as that? Besides, is this a true representation of the facts? *Does* Paul speak

"obscurely"? Does he intend to affirm a bare *possibility*? Let the reader glance again over the passages I have cited, and point if he can, to one which betrays the slightest doubt. On the contrary, language could not be more forcible in urging upon his readers the absolute certainty of the great event foretold, and their duty to "stand fast, and hold the traditions they had received" from him; while his fervent prayer was that the Lord would "direct their hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ."¹

6. Prof. Cowles suggests that Paul, in his declarations about the Parousia, is not to be understood as teaching the *fact* of its near approach, but as expressing simply his own ardent *desire*.² Dr. Ellicott also: "It may perhaps be admitted that the sacred writers have used language in reference to the Lord's return which seems to show that the *longings of hope* had almost become the convictions of belief."³ And Dorner: "Their *longing* anticipated his second coming earlier than the event showed."⁴ That is to say, they are utterances of *desire* and *hope*, not teachings of divine *truth*.

¹ "It is incredible that the apostles, if enlightened by supernatural influence, should not have been taught better than to lead the whole Christian church to a vain and false hope about the appearance of Christ, which, when frustrated by time and experience, would lead, of course, to general distrust in all their experiences and hopes." Stuart, Com., Rom. 13: 11.

² Bib. Sac.

³ Com. 1 Tim. 6: 14.

⁴ Fut. State, p. 67.

It is amazing to me that these excellent writers do not see that all such methods of evading the acknowledged import of the language are really assaults upon its inspired authority. To attribute to the mere personal idiosyncrasies of the apostle, his hopes and wishes, the over-sanguine expectations of his earlier years, and the like, the utterances which we are expected to receive as the materials of our faith, is to make our faith stand, not in the power of God, but in the wisdom,—and that imperfect and erring,—of men. To every such suggestion the words of Dean Alford are a sufficient reply: “Was the apostle, or was he not, writing in the power of a Spirit higher than his own? Have we, in any sense, God speaking in the Bible, or have we not? If we have, then of all passages it is in these which treat so confidently of futurity that we must recognize his voice. If we have it not in these passages, then where are we to listen to it at all?”¹

7. A favorite modern method of disposing of the testimonies cited is to acknowledge that they teach the speedy coming of the Lord, but at the same time to insist that instead of being fulfilled in any definite historical event of the past, it is to be anticipated *at all times*. The great attraction of this view seems to be, as of that just cited from Olshausen, that it promotes the “ethical” effect of leading Christians to be always expecting and watching for the great event. Thus Archbishop Trench: “It is a necessary element of the doctrine concerning the second com-

¹ Proleg. 2 Thess., p. 64.

ing of Christ, that it should be possible *at any time*,—that no generation of believers should regard it as impossible in theirs.”¹ So Alford, “From such passages as this, we see that the apostolic age maintained that which ought to be *the attitude of all ages*, constant expectation of our Lord’s return.”¹ And the “Prophetic Conference” of N. Y. affirmed as one of their fundamental articles, “The second coming of the Lord Jesus is everywhere in the Scriptures represented as *imminent*, and may occur *at any* moment; yet the precise day and hour is unknown to man and known only to God.”²

This view of the matter is a very plausible one, but I do not think it will bear close examination. First, I ask, *where* in the Scriptures is the second coming of the Lord represented as continually imminent, so that it may occur at any moment? Grant that it was so when the sacred books were written, say any time before A.D. 70, where is the passage that extends the same fact to all future time, and makes it *always* imminent? Nay, I do not ask for the passage, I affirm fearlessly that there is none. Nothing of the sort can be produced from the whole New Testament. It may as well be said that the date A.D. 70 is perpetual, and ever about to be reached. Therefore, secondly, the very fact that, as asserted, the second coming was before A.D. 70 “imminent” is certain proof that it has not since been. The word “imminent” means *near at hand*;

¹ Com. 1 Tim. 6: 14.

² Mill. Essays, p. 8.

and if it was near in any reasonable sense of the term eighteen hundred and twelve years ago, then it must have taken place long ere this, or the prophecy has failed. It is a plain abuse of words to put upon them two such self-contradictory meanings.

8. And herein, I hold, is a complete demonstration of the error of that whole method of using Scripture which is employed to substantiate modern Adventism. All the terms and phrases which when first uttered by our Lord and his apostles, *did* teach the imminence of his coming are now, after more than eighteen centuries, quoted to prove its *present* imminence. Why do not our brethren see that this is a violation of the fundamental meanings of words? It is wresting the elementary ideas of time and number; it is like setting the multiplication table against itself. The words "quickly," "at hand," "in a little while," "in this generation," etc., mean *soon*, or they do not. If they do, then, as God is faithful, the event was fulfilled long ago; if they do *not*, then they are of no avail to prove it near to-day. Whatever they mean now, they meant then; if they are good for anything to assure us that the advent is now near, they are just as good to prove that it was then near, and is therefore now long past.

The same thing may be said of the Lord's command to his disciples to be looking for his coming. "No candid person," say the Mill. Essays (p. 59), "will deny that the Lord does command his disciples in all ages to watch for his coming." If the meaning of the writer only were that the Christian should

be always in the state of expectancy that his reigning Lord may at any time put forth remarkable displays of his power and grace, such as the Scriptures often style his coming to men, we might easily assent to it. But, obviously, he means more than this, that we are directed to be ever in the attitude of waiting and looking for that particular event called the Parousia; and in this sense, at the risk of the charge of uncandor, I do not hesitate to deny it. In the period before A.D. 70, it was indeed true, but I challenge the writer to cite a single instance of such Scripture command resting upon any person since.

The truth manifestly is, that all these theories, so laudably desirous of conserving the "ethical" effect of a speedy expectation of the Parousia, have, doubtless unawares,—for I would not charge any deliberate intention of error,—taken up into them a latent *anachronism* which vitiates all their conclusions. What was true in the apostolic age, but which by a hundred plain testimonies was limited to that age, is assumed to be now and always true. Those limitations of time are utterly ignored, often positively denied. Alford says expressly and sweepingly, the time of the Parousia was *unknown*; as if *every thing* was unknown which was not fixed by calendar and clock to a precise hour.

I hold it as an axiom that good "ethical" effects can flow only from *the truth*. It cannot benefit one to believe that the second coming of the Lord is imminent, unless, in fact, it *is*. The one indispensable thing, then, for the advocates of this opinion is, to

prove it true. And that is to be done, not by declamation or fervent rhetoric, but by the severe laws of interpretation,—as the venerable Dr. Hodge said, “The only legitimate method is the *exegetical*.”¹ When it can be shown by this that the great body of testimonies adduced fairly mean that the Parousia is always “imminent,” then, and only then, can that theory be admitted as true.

8. But the most common, and till lately, the most esteemed, method of escaping from the obvious language of our Lord and his apostles, has been by resorting to the theory of a *double sense*. These prophetic utterances, it is said, had two meanings; first, the apparent one, which was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem; and secondly, within and beyond this, a higher one, which awaits fulfillment at the so-called end of the world. This is what Dean Alford calls “the pregnant meaning of prophecy,” and which he applies to our Lord’s great discourse in Matt. 24th and 25th as follows:—“*Two parallel interpretations* run through the former part as far as verse 28; the destruction of Jerusalem and the final judgment being both enwrapped in the words, but the former, in this part of the chapter, predominating. Even in this part, however, we cannot tell how applicable the warnings given may be to the events of the last times, in which apparently Jerusalem is to play so distinguished a part. From verse 28 the lesser subject begins to be swallowed up by the greater, and our Lord’s second coming to be the pre-

¹ Theology, Vol. II, p. 527.

dominant theme, with, however, certain hints thrown back, as it were, at the event which was immediately in question ; till in the latter part of the chapter and the whole of the next, the second advent, and at last the final judgment ensuing on it, are the subjects.”¹

Of the correctness of this theory as a principle of sound exegesis, I shall say but little. It is entirely unsatisfactory to my mind, and has been strenuously controverted by some of our ablest commentators, to whose arguments I would refer the reader.² My objections to it may be stated briefly. 1. There is no *proof* of such double sense in the Scriptures. They nowhere assert anything of the sort, and give no example of an inspired person resorting to such a mode of interpretation. 2. There is no warrant for it in the ordinary *laws of language*, except when a writer is professedly employing parables, riddles, or allegories. 3. The secondary and so called higher sense is wholly *indeterminate*. No one can tell where it begins or ends, or how much is included in it. Observe in the very example proposed by the learned Dean, how exceedingly indefinite are the metes and bounds of the two senses ; indeed, how the mind of the reader must flit back and forth from one to the other, making his imagination his only guide, and confessing as he does, “We cannot tell how applicable the warnings given may be” to the latter. 4. The principle is *unsafe*. Scripture thus interpreted becomes susceptible of any and every

¹ Com. Matt. 24 : 3.

² Stuart. *Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy*, pp. 11-17.

meaning which theory or fancy may invent. Witness the innumerable extravagances which have been put forth on this subject of the second advent, all based on the assumption that the Scripture language means something over and beyond what it seems to mean,—extravagances which have done so much to bring the whole subject of eschatology into contempt, and to dishonor the word of God. In the present case, it is enough to say that neither the Lord nor his apostles ever speak of but *one* Parousia, and never assign any other time for it, primary or secondary, than that existing generation. If there is to be another, to occur at some distant era still future, that fact must be gathered from some other source than their recorded words.¹

“But is there,” says Prof. Fisher, “no such thing as a double sense of Scripture? Is everything that is meant patent on the surface? Did not the prophets utter more truth than they knew? The Old Testament political and ritual system was the rudimental form of the Messianic kingdom; it was representative, and thus emblematic; there is a germinant and a consummated fulfillment of prophecy; divine providence and the inspiring Spirit saw a reach of meaning in the words of the seer which he himself, within his confined horizon, was precluded from beholding. All this may be admitted without qualifying in the least the

¹ “And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That patter with us in a *double sense*,
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.”

Macbeth, Act V. Scene 8.

proposition that the rigid application of the grammatico-historical method is the only means of arriving at the sense of Scripture. Abandon this method and you embark in a vessel without a helm, on a sea without a shore. Every deviation from this plain rule is not only indefensible in itself, but is pernicious, for the reason that it furnishes a maxim and precedents for the perverse interpretation of any portion of Scripture the honest meaning of which may be unwelcome to any class of readers. The warrant for the principal doctrines of Revelation is thereby unsettled. Scripture is made a nose of wax, to be shaped according to every man's whim."² Christian Union, 1880, p. 32.

² It has been suggested as an inconsistency that, while I reject the doctrine of a double or "pregnant" sense of prophecy, my own explanation of Matt. 24: 34, virtually involves it. If the Parousia, with all that it embraced, began in that generation, it certainly was not completed then. "The only difference," writes a friend, "between you and others, is that you hold that the Parousia *began* to be fulfilled in that generation, but is continued indefinitely, while they hold that there are various distinct comings at definite points." I reply, Matt. 24: 34 does not say that all that had been mentioned with all involved in it should be *completed* in that generation. Our English version indeed has "till all these things be *fulfilled*," but the Greek is much less definite,—“till all these things become, or begin to be” (*ἕως ἂν πάντα ταῦτα γένηται*). So in Mark and Luke. Robinson defines this verb thus: "To begin to be; to come into existence, etc., as implying *origin*, either from natural causes or through special agency, result, or change of state, place," etc. The exact rendering is, Till all these things have come into being, not till all are *completed*. The word is entirely different from the one the disciples used in asking their questions as reported by Mark, "What shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" (*ὅταν μέλλῃ πάντα ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι*).

SECTION VI.

OBJECTIONS.

But not only is the obvious meaning of the passages under consideration evaded in the methods described; it is also directly *opposed* by many considerations.

1. The first is, that so understood those passages were *not fulfilled*; the Parousia did not take place in that generation. Says Alford: "All these præterist interpretations have against them one fatal objection,—that it is impossible to conceive of the destruction of Jerusalem as in any sense corresponding to the Parousia in St. Paul's sense of the term."—"The destruction of Jerusalem is inadequate as an interpretation of the coming of the Lord here. He has not yet come in any sense adequate to such interpretation; therefore the prophecy has yet to be fulfilled." Proleg. 2 Tim. sects. 24, 28. In reply it may be remarked:

First, that as a principle of interpretation this is *unsound and unsafe*. If the words of our Lord, according to the established and undoubted laws of language, do say, that the Parousia should be in that generation, then that was his assertion. If not fulfilled, it may discredit his truthfulness, but it does

The objection, therefore, is founded, not upon the original text, but upon our inexact English rendering. I hold it as *corroborative* of the meaning I have given to the Parousia, that it does most perfectly correspond to the precise shade of thought involved in our Saviour's carefully chosen word, a term not implying a *complete* fulfillment, but a *begun* fulfillment. The word neither requires a double sense, nor permits it.

not disprove the fact that he said so. Failure to pay a note of hand when due, does not prove that payment at that time was not *promised*. The learned Dean himself strenuously contends for this principle in other places. Often things are said in the New Testament, to be done "that it might be fulfilled" (*ἵνα πληρωθῇ*) which had been spoken by a prophet, when on comparing the event with the alleged prediction we find it impossible to see *how* one was the fulfillment of the other. Yet Dean Alford insists that we must so accept it, whatever the difficulty. He will not permit us to evade the force of the words by a hair's breadth. "Such a construction," he says (that it might be fulfilled), "can have but one meaning. If such meaning involves us in difficulty regarding the prophecy itself, far better leave such difficulty in so doubtful a matter as the interpretation of prophecy unsolved, than create one in so simple a matter as the rendering of a phrase whose meaning no indifferent person could doubt." Com. Matt. 1: 22. This is a weighty observation, and most worthy to be remembered. Had the author himself observed it, he would not have tried to get rid of the meaning of this prophecy of the Parousia, which is affirmed by a multitude of phrases no less simple, no less impossible to be doubted by any indifferent person, than the one to which he referred.

Second. It is not, I submit, competent for any uninspired man to say what is and what is not an "adequate" fulfillment of prophecy, against the pointed indications contained in its own language. There

certainly *did* happen in that generation an event or cluster of events, which, considered in their own nature and in their relations to the history of mankind past and future, surpassed in importance every other that can be named, save only the death of Christ. That great spiritual and civil establishment, the Hebrew theocracy, which created at once a religion and a state, founded by the direct appointment of Jehovah amid the visible splendors of Sinai, and hallowed by a duration of sixteen hundred years,—an institution represented in Christ's time in the grandest city and most august temple in the world,—was suddenly, and with such horrors as never attended any like catastrophe, overthrown, and in place of it was set up another theocracy; a spiritual kingdom, which from that hour, like the stone cut out without hands, entered upon a career of development and conquest which shall one day fill the whole earth; whose capital shall be a "New Jerusalem" ten thousand times exceeding the old one in splendor and power, into which the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor; whose temple shall be the Presence of God and the Lamb, and where Jesus shall reign forever. Who shall say that such an event, or cluster of events, was "inadequate" to the most exalted conception of the language employed by our Saviour? We call it, indeed, for convenience sake, the "destruction of Jerusalem," from *one* of the incidents embraced in it, but it is a great mistake to suppose that that bare physical event,—which in itself may or may not have been more important than that of other cities before or after,—was *all* that we mean

by it. And with all respect for this great commentator, I must beg leave to say that, precisely in the same way that he has done, might a Rabbi of our Saviour's own day have disproved the fact of his first advent. Had not all the prophets declared that the Messiah should come as a mighty and triumphant king? And was the poor Galilean who stood bound before Pilate, forsaken by his nearest friends, and scornfully rejected by the very people whom he claimed as his subjects, *that* king? "It is impossible," Caiaphas might have said, "to conceive of this Jesus as in any sense corresponding to the prophetic descriptions of our Messiah.—He has not come in any sense adequate to those descriptions; therefore, this is not the Messiah, and the prophecies have yet to be fulfilled?"¹

2. Another objection of a similar character is that the Parousia was to be accompanied by stupendous *physical phenomena*, which did not occur in that age. The sun and moon should be darkened; the stars should fall from heaven; the Son of man should be seen coming in the clouds with power and great glory; he should be attended with his mighty angels, and with the great sound of a trumpet; the heavens should pass away with a great noise, the elements melt with fervent heat, the earth and the works that are therein should be burned up; and a new heaven and a new earth created. Because all this did not happen in that generation, therefore, it is alleged, the Parousia did not take place.

¹ See Canon Farrar, *Early Days of Christianity*, pp. 489, 490.

Now I freely concede that the prophecy was not fulfilled in the physical sense of these terms. I admit fully the incompatibility between it and any *such* fulfillment. What then is the inference? The same that every one makes, that the language on the one side or the other must be taken in some modified sense that will obviate this contradiction. Which shall it be? On the side of the prediction, the language, as we have seen, is simple, direct, plain; it is scarcely susceptible of a figurative meaning; it is repeated in a great many forms, nearly a hundred times; and *we know what meaning it bore* in the minds of those who uttered and those who heard it. On the other side, we find the language poetic, symbolic, in itself absolutely incapable of being taken literally. The stars to fall from heaven,—the uncounted millions of mighty suns to leave their constellations and galaxies and take their flight to this little earth? Impossible! The moon to be turned into *blood*,—a vast globe of clotted gore? The sun turned into *darkness*? The elements,—earth, air, fire, and water—to *melt*? The heavens,—the emptiness of infinite space showing to us only the reflected blue of the sunlight—to be *rolled together* as a scroll? Certainly not. In their very nature all these expressions are figurative. They must, because of their appropriate symbolism, or of ancient prophetic usage, be understood as referring to great moral changes on the earth, just such as we have described as connected with what is called concisely the “destruction of Jerusalem.” I shall endeavor to show, hereafter,

that such *was* their well-known prophetic usage, as familiar to and as incapable of being misapprehended by the Jews of Christ's time as their commonest dialect on religious topics, and in that sense they were all most signally fulfilled.

3. It is objected further, in the same line, that the Parousia of Christ was to be accompanied by the *resurrection of the dead, the day of judgment, the end of the world*, etc., and as these did not occur in that age, the Parousia itself could not have taken place. This is probably the most formidable objection that has been or can be urged against the views I have maintained. But the difficulty, to my mind, lies in the restricted ideas which we have been so accustomed to give to the Parousia, limiting it without warrant to a brief time, as a single day, or a *point* in duration. The word itself, as I have already shown, conveys no such limited meaning, rather does it denote relations of permanence with men,—an abiding PRESENCE, which, beginning with the overthrow of the ancient dispensation, its sacred city and its temple, once the dwelling-place of Jehovah, but now “left to them desolate,” is to last as long as the Messiah reigns; long enough for the spiritual conquest of the world, for the resurrection and the judgment; long enough to find its most glorious realization in the New Jerusalem, which John himself represents to be “the tabernacle of God with men, in which he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall BE WITH THEM and be their God.”

4. It is argued with great confidence that this view of the Parousia is *inconsistent with the perpetuity of the Lord's Supper*, which, as Paul teaches in 1 Cor. 11: 26, was to be observed "till he come." I reply, whether the inference be sound or not, it cannot be pretended that the passage denies that the coming *was* near; nay, it is founded, as we shall presently see, on the very fact that such nearness was expected. Aside from the inference, it goes to confirm all that testimony which I have adduced; indeed, there is no part of Paul's writings which insists with more iteration and emphasis upon this very truth than this same epistle to the Corinthians. The objection, then, is not one which contravenes any special views of mine, but lies against Paul himself. It is for the objector, no less than for me, to answer it the best way he can.

But, in truth, the alleged inconsistency does not exist. The phrase "till" or "until" (*ἄχρις οὗ ἂν*), while specifying a time unto which something is continued, does by no means imply that its continuance then ceases. Acts 7: 18. "The people grew and multiplied in Egypt (*ἄχρις οὗ*) till another king arose who knew not Jesus." Did they not also grow after that? Acts 27: 33. "While (*ἄχρις οὗ*) the day was coming on" (more exactly, till the day was about to begin), "Paul besought them all to take meat." Did he cease to advise this as soon as the day dawned? Rom. 5: 13. "Until the law (*ἄχρι νόμου*) sin was in the world." Was it not here also after the law was given? 1 Cor. 15: 25. "For he

must reign until ($\acute{\alpha}\chi\rho\iota\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\alpha}\nu$) he hath put all enemies under his feet." Is he then to reign no longer? Gal. 4: 19. "Of whom I travail in birth again until ($\acute{\alpha}\chi\rho\iota\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon$) Christ be formed in you." Would Paul cease his affectionate solicitude for his spiritual children after that? Rev. 2: 25. "But that which ye have hold fast till ($\acute{\alpha}\chi\rho\iota\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\alpha}\nu$) I come." Here is a case exactly in point,—the very same phrase precisely. Christ enjoins the believers in Thyatira, whom he had severely reproved for certain sins, to hold fast to what good they had till he came. Did he mean that after that they were to be faithful no longer? Why then should it be inferred that 1 Cor. 11: 26—"Ye do show the Lord's death till ($\acute{\alpha}\chi\rho\iota\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\alpha}\nu$) he come"—teaches that after that they should do it no longer?

The direction before us is only one of many in which the apostle urged upon the pleasure-loving Corinthians the grave and solemn duties growing out of the speedy coming of the Lord. They were carnal, sectarian, contentious, censorious of all but their favorite teacher, fond of lawsuits, ever addicted to sensuality, both in common life and in their most sacred church relations. The one inducement which beyond any other he plied to cure them of these sins was the warning, "Maran-atha!"—the Lord is coming! His own most earnest prayer was that they might be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (ch. 1: 8). He bade them waive their disputes about their teachers till the day, so soon at hand, when the work of those teachers would be

tried with fire (3: 13). The incestuous man should be delivered unto Satan, that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. They who went to law were reminded that the saints would soon judge the world (6: 2). Even in the ordinary relations of life they were to live mindful of this fact. The time was short; they that had wives should be as those that had none; they that wept as those that wept not; they that rejoiced as those that rejoiced not; they that bought as those that possessed not; they that used this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world ("the expiry of the *αἰὼν οὗτος*, the end of which is the world-embracing catastrophe of the Parousia"—Meyer), was passing away (7: 29-31). So with the supper of the Lord; it was not a carnal feast for the gratification of pride and appetite, but a sacred memorial of the Saviour, in which they were to hold up his death before the giddy heathen about them till he should come. This was the one event for which, and under the solemn impressions of which, they were to do all things. It belittles his whole earnest argument to make this a mere *mark of time*, up to which they were to live as became Christians. Just as well might it be argued, that after the coming they might be contentious and carnal and worldly and unclean, as that they should then cease to commemorate the Lord's death. Paul meant no such thing. His eye was upon their present sins, and how to cure them. His whole solicitude was to prepare them, by repentance and reformation, for that coming.

Whence, then, I may be asked, would the Corinthians, after the supposed event of the Parousia,—say in A.D. 70,—understanding fully that now the Lord had come, in view of these words of the apostle, derive the obligation to continue the observance of the supper? In other words, whence do *we* derive it? I answer, first, from the original source whence it came to all churches, the command of Christ himself, “Take, eat; this is my body. Drink ye all of it.” (Matt. 26: 26, 27). “This is my blood of the N. T. which is shed for many.” (Mark 14: 24). “This do in remembrance of me.” (Luke 22: 19). This command is absolute and unqualified; it is limited to no time, place or persons. Second. From the abiding benefits of the institution to all believers in all time. It was given to his people *here in the flesh*, to be a medium of communion with their Lord while no longer *bodily* with them. Even though the Parousia has begun, it is not the *visible, corporeal* presence of the Lord. He has to be apprehended by faith as truly as at any time in the apostolic age. The Parousia itself is an object of faith, not of bodily sight. Hence the use of this material rite to be both a memorial and a monument of the Lord, for the instruction of the church and the world, until the veil of the flesh be taken away, and we may enter where he is into the intimacy and the joy of his resurrection life.

5. It is urged that the coming of Christ was to be *a bodily and a visible one*, and as no such coming has yet taken place, the Parousia must still be fu-

ture. It would not trouble me greatly to admit that, in appearance, this is implied in the modes of speech in which the coming is most commonly mentioned. The objection is analogous to that derived from the physical phenomena just adverted to. In other words, it was a part of the *costume* under which the grand event was set forth. As he was to come "in the clouds, with the great sound of a trumpet, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God," so consistently with this "every eye should see him," all which, in the sense intended, I must believe happened as predicted. I shall endeavor to show in a subsequent chapter what is the real significance of this whole class of representations, and that they are in no wise inconsistent with those more exact teachings which so fully affirm that the Parousia was an event of the then immediate future.

If, however, it be insisted on that it is taught as a strictly *literal* truth, that the coming was to be visible to men in the flesh, I must beg leave to dissent. Dr. Tyng (in Mill. Essays pp. 22-46) *asserts* it often, and with great force, but I do not think he *proves* it. He insists that the word *parousia* implies as much, since the presence of Paul and Stephanas and Titus was visible and bodily, as if, when used of men in the flesh, who because such *could* be present *only* in the body, it must therefore mean the same thing when applied to the glorified person of Christ. So with the word ἀποκάλυψις, translated revelation, appearing, etc., though he is obliged to admit that in Matt. 11: 27, "to whomsoever the Son will reveal

him," i.e., God; the person is "ever invisible, and can only be spiritually perceived." *Ἐπιφάνεια*, also (appearing), he shows from Schleusner's definition to mean primarily "the appearance of a thing corporal and resplendent,"—just as if all words of mental perception, in all languages, were not derived from roots of physical import. Especially does Dr. Tyng dwell on the assertion, that because Christ's coming was to be *personal*, it must be *visible*, as if in speaking of beings other than man there can be no personality without visibility; as if God himself, because a Divine Person, must therefore be an object of sight.

6. There is one passage, however, which figures so largely in all millennarian arguments for the visibility of the second coming that it should receive our special consideration. It occurs in Acts 1: 11, where the angels say to the apostles, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come *in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven."

The meaning of this declaration depends on the phrase "in like manner,"—Greek, *ὁν τρόπον*. I cannot deny that many able commentators give it the signification above mentioned. Prof. Hackett says, "The expression is never employed to affirm merely the certainty of an event as compared with another. The assertion that the meaning is simply that, *as* Christ had departed, *so also* would he return, is contradicted by every passage in which the phrase oc-

curs." Alford: "To be taken in all cases literally, not as implying mere certainty." And Professor Alexander: "The Greek phrase, *δὴ τρόπον*, never indicates mere certainty or vague resemblance, but wherever it occurs in the New Testament denotes identity of mode or manner."

It may perhaps be deemed presumption for me to call in question the critical opinion of scholars like these, but as they themselves appeal to the other passages where the phrase occurs, we may venture to accept the appeal, and judge for ourselves. The expression occurs elsewhere in the New Testament four times, viz., Matt. 23: 37; Luke 13: 34; Acts 7: 28; 2 Tim. 3: 8.

The first two instances may be regarded as identical. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,—how often would I have gathered thy children together even as—*δὴ τρόπον*—a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!" Now I submit to my readers whether our Saviour meant to say that he had longed to gather the wayward people of Jerusalem under his sheltering care, in an "identity of mode or manner" with that in which a hen broods over her chickens. Surely not. Undoubtedly more is meant than the simple certainty of the act; it implies equal tenderness and faithfulness, but it does not imply an exact resemblance in the *form* of it.

The next passage occurs in Stephen's rehearsal of the scene between Moses and the Egyptian in the desert. "Wilt thou kill me as—*δὴ τρόπον*—thou

didst the Egyptian yesterday?" Here again I ask, was the mind of the inquirer fixed on the *mode* of the apprehended killing, or on its certainty as a fact? Was he solicitous to know whether it was to be done with staff or dagger, and the body buried in the sand, or simply whether it was to be *done*, without reference to manner? The latter, most certainly. The force of the comparison rests in the anticipated repetition of the act, not its identity of form.

The remaining passage also relates to an incident in the life of Moses. "Now as—*ὡς τρόπον*—Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth." These are the traditional names of the magicians who imitated in the presence of Pharaoh the miracles wrought by God's servant. Ex. 7: 11, 22. But surely it will not be alleged that the false teachers whom the apostle condemns opposed the truth precisely in the same way that the magicians did, viz., by changing rods into serpents and the waters of the Nile into blood. The point of comparison in Paul's mind was in the *fact* of opposition, possibly with the further idea of malice and evil design, but it could not have meant to include the outward form or method of procedure.

Besides these instances in the New Testament, the same phrase is several times found in the Septuagint. Gen. 26: 29. "That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as—*ὡς τρόπον*—we have done unto thee nothing but good." Isa. 33: 4. "Your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of

the caterpillar, as—*δν τρόπον*—the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them.” 2 Macc. 15: 39. “As—*δν τρόπον*—wine mingled with water is pleasant and delightful to the taste, even so speech finely framed delighteth the ears of them that read the story.” In these again, as in the former instances, the point of the comparison is in the similarity of the results, and not in any identity of the outward act.

Instead then, of this Greek phrase meaning what is alleged in every place where it occurs, we find in fact that it never means that; that such meaning, if put upon it, would be absurd and impossible. It must have been by inadvertence, without an actual examination of the point, that the eminent scholars named gave their opinion as they did. We take the liberty to offset them by the statement of another equally eminent, whose competence as a critic of the Greek none will question, the late Professor Crosby of Dartmouth College. “In reading this passage we are in danger of attaching more force to the expression in our version, ‘in like manner as,’ than the original words—*δν τρόπον*—require. These words *have no necessary reference to the particular manner in which a thing is done.*” Sec. Advent, p. 15.

It turns out then in this case, as in not a few others, that the materialistic aspect of this passage is due rather to its peculiar rendering in our English version, than to the exact meaning of the original. Had our translators been uniform in their renderings, giving the phrase here precisely as they did in

every other instance in the New Testament, that aspect would not have appeared.¹

And does not the passage itself bear upon the face of it that it is not to be so interpreted? "He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go." But he departed, as the narrative implies, under the same physical form that he had worn ever since his resurrection. He had been conversing with his disciples in his usual manner. There is not the slightest intimation that, so long as he remained visible, there was any other than his usual aspect. As he went up "a cloud received him," and that was all. But is *that* the way he is to come again?—*that* the fulfillment of the sublime language in which his return is elsewhere set forth, "in the glory of his Father," "with his mighty angels," "in flaming fire," "the voice of the archangel and the trump of God?" Insist upon it that exact "identity of form

¹ This will be more apparent if the several passages be shown side by side. Two of them present the comparison in the natural order.

Luke 13: 34.

How often would I have gathered *as* a hen doth gather her brood
 ered thy children together under her wings.

Acts 7: 28.

Wilt thou kill me *as* thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?

The other two place the second part of the comparison first.

2 Tim. 3: 8.

Now *as* Jannes and Jambres *so* do these also resist the
 withstood Moses, truth.

Acts 1: 11.

This same Jesus—*as* ye have *so* shall he come.
 seen him go into heaven,

and manner" is meant, and you place this text in irreconcilable contradiction with every other which describes the ineffable majesty of his appearing.¹

. 7. It has been objected to our view that before the second coming of Christ, there was to be a *dispensation of the Holy Spirit*, supplying the place of the Lord, and representing him during his absence. John 14: 16, 17. Such a ministration of the Comforter was indeed appointed, and it is our blessed privilege to be living under it. But this dispensation, as we understand it, was not to be something interposed between Christ's ascension and Parousia, but a gracious provision to take the place of a *bodily and sensuous presence* of the Lord under his Parousia while his people are here in probation. When he told his disciples that it was expedient for them that he should go away (John 16: 7), he meant that it was best that he should not be an object of sense, involving a sense-intercourse with them, and all the effects that would flow from a sense-establishment among them. Though he would come to be with them as their King and Lord, it would be an invisible presence, the object of faith, not of sight. What he would do for them if visibly here should be done, and much better done, by the Comforter whom he

¹ Goulbourn, in the Bampton Lectures for 1850, argues that the object of Christ's appearing to men in bodily form after his resurrection was not only to show to men the fact of a resurrection, but also the nature of the resurrection body. There were then *uses* for a visible body at that time, which will never exist again; therefore it is unreasonable to suppose that on his second return he will have such a body.

would send in his name, and who should take of his things and show them to them. This did not imply that Christ would not come in his glory, but was itself proof that he would, for it was only after he was glorified that the Spirit could be given. Compare John 7: 39. This view is very fully presented by Meyer. "Christ must through death return to heaven and begin his heavenly rule, in order as *sunthronos* (joint sovereign) with the Father and Lord over all (17: 5; 1 Cor. 15: 25), as Lord also of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3: 18) to *send* the Spirit from heaven. 16: 7. * * * 'The outpouring of the Spirit was the proof that he had entered his supra-mundane state.' (Hoffman). And so also the office of the Spirit to glorify Christ (16: 14), presupposes as the condition of its operation the commencement of the glory (*δόξα*) of Christ. Till then believers were dependent on the *personal* manifestation of Jesus; he was the possessor of that Spirit who though given in its fullness to Christ himself (3: 34), and though operating through him in his people (3: 6; 6: 63; Luke 9: 55), was not until after Christ's return to glory (Eph. 4: 7, 8), to be given to the faithful as the *Paraclete and representative of Christ for the carrying on of his work.*"¹ Thus viewed, the dispensation of the Spirit does not prove that the Parousia did not take place when predicted, but is itself the surer proof that it did.

8. But the objection to our view which is urged with most frequency and confidence is derived from

¹ Com. John 7: 39.

the language of the Apostle in 2 Thess. 2: 12. "We beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, that the day of the Lord is now present," etc.

Such is the language which, it is so often said, expressly contradicts the doctrine of the near approach of the Parousia. We ask the reader to note on the very face of it how far it is from justifying the statements which have been based upon it. "He warns them against the expectation of the speedy advent of Christ."¹ "We find that he sometimes refutes those who expected the Lord's return to be close at hand and gladly anticipated it."² "This interpretation (of the speedy advent of Christ upon earth a second time) was formally and strenuously corrected in 2 Thess. 2."³

What then *was* the error which these Thessalonians held? Our common English version has it, "That the day of the Lord is *at hand*." The Revised Version gives the true reading, "*is come*." "Not only the nearness but the *actual presence* and commencement of the day," says Ellicott. "Is present," says Auberlen.⁴ He adds, "The apostle does not intend generally to put far away the expectation of

¹ Hodge, Com. on 1 Cor. 15: 51.

² Bloomfield, in loc.

³ Stuart, Com. on Rom. 13: 10.

⁴ In Lange's Com.

the last day. We are merely not to let ourselves be surprised by the cry, '*Here it is now!*'"¹

The expectation of the *speedy* coming of the Lord, then, was not the error into which these Christians had fallen, nor which the apostle here corrected. On the contrary, in this very chapter he reiterates the command to "stand fast and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word or epistle of ours," i. e., to be in the attitude of "waiting for his Son from heaven," which he had preached to them at first, and so forcibly enjoined upon them in his former letter.

But the "falling away" and the "Man of Sin" must precede the Parousia. How can that be made consistent with the theory of his speedy coming?

This epistle was written in the year A.D. 53. Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70. Assuming this to have been synchronous with the Parousia, we have a period of *seventeen years* during which these events, on the theory I maintain, must have occurred. What was there in that period at all answering to the description of those things contained in this chapter?

First the "falling away,"—Greek, *the apostasy*. In the original, the article prefixed shows it was some known and definite event, one that had been

¹ "It was most important for the Thessalonians to know that they did not need to get up every morning with the awe-inspiring expectation that the sun might be darkened before it set, and the air shattered by the archangelic trumpet, and all earthly interests smitten into indistinguishable ruin." Farrar, *Life of Paul*, Vol. I., p. 613.

before spoken of, and which the Thessalonians would recognize, needing no other designation than "*the apostasy*." Now we find in Matt. 24: 10-12 that this was one of the very things which our Saviour expressly said should precede the destruction of Jerusalem. "Then shall many stumble and shall deliver up one another and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied the love of the many shall wax cold." And that such a defection actually occurred among the infant churches during this very period is a matter of history. Tacitus, in describing the persecution under Nero, says, "Those who confessed they were Christians were first brought to trial, and after that a vast multitude of others in consequence of *their testimony*."¹ Frequent allusions are made in the later epistles, written from A.D. 55 to A.D. 65, to the dangers of such an apostasy. See especially the second epistle to Timothy, the epistle to the Hebrews, chapters 3, 6, and 12, the second epistle of Peter, and the epistles of the Apocalypse to the seven churches of Asia. Who can doubt, then, that the apostle who had preached to the Thessalonians so fully the coming of Christ, as predicted in this discourse in Matthew, had told them of this great defection, of which he now reminds them again, as "*the apostasy*" which must precede that coming, an event whose occurrence in those very seventeen years is as clearly es-

¹ *Primo correpti qui fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum multitudo ingens.* Annal. 15: 44.

tablished in history as that of the wars and famines and earthquakes that were mentioned in the same connection.¹

Secondly, the "Man of Sin," called also in verse 8, ὁ Ἄνομος, "the Lawless One." In attempting to show whom Paul meant by these appellations I would speak with becoming diffidence, where the ablest commentators have been so much puzzled. Apart from that fact, however, I confess it does not seem to be such an unresolvable mystery. Three things, I think, ought to concur in the solution. 1. The Man of Sin must be a *person*.² It seems to me very unnatural to suppose that Paul meant to designate in such terms a mere abstract principle of evil, such as a heresy in doctrine, or a long succession of evil doers, like the popes. 2. He must be one in such position and holding such relations to the Thessalonians as to be an object of apprehension to them personally. What can be more improbable than that Paul, writing a brief letter to these friends of his on matters of the most practical character, should interpose among its affectionate counsels a formal proph-

¹ It is surprising what assertions the most eminent writers often make under the influence of a pre-accepted theory. Thus Olshausen, who denies the fulfillment of this prophecy before the destruction of Jerusalem, says, "The persecutions of that period were not so violent as to drive many away from the faith, and from the first glow of love." (Com. on Matt. 24: 11-13). Yet among these persecutions was that of Nero, A.D. 64-68. If he deems this not a "violent" one, it would be interesting to learn his idea of violence.

² "They—the early fathers—all regard the Adversary here described as an *individual person*, the incarnation and concentration of sin." Alford. Proleg. on 2 Thess., 53.

ecy of some disastrous event that should happen in distant ages and lands,—if the papacy, at least five hundred—if something even now future, two thousand years after their day, and with which they had no more to do practically than we have with what may happen in Ethiopia twenty centuries hence? ¹

3. He must be, nevertheless, one whom for some reason it would be unsafe or improper to name more definitely,—who might be referred to only under these enigmatic terms, which, however, the Thessalonians would readily understand on recalling what the apostle had said to them the year before when he was present with them. ²

¹“The moment we recognize the fact that the function of the inspired prophets was *not to utter predictions of a distant future to people who had no concern with it*, but to speak on behalf of God and his righteousness to the *men of their own generation*, who needed practical guidance and warning, the use of their words to divine beforehand the long course of history for thousands of years, and to fix our own position now in the on-sweeping current of time, cannot appear otherwise than a baseless and perilous superstition.” Blackwood, cited in Living Age, Dec. 2, 1882, p. 549.

²“It is enigmatically expressed for two reasons, first, because all that is enigmatical in it for us had been orally explained to the Thessalonians, who would therefore clearly understand it; and secondly, because there was some obvious danger in committing it to writing. This is in itself a sufficient proof that he is referring to *the Roman Empire and Emperor*. The tone of St. Paul is exactly the same as that of Josephus when he explains the prophecy of Daniel. All Jews regarded the Fourth Empire as the Roman; but when Josephus comes to the stone which is to dash the image to pieces, he stops short and says that ‘*he does not think proper to explain it*’ (Ant. x. 10, 4.)—for the obvious reason that it would have been politically dangerous for him to do so.” Farrar, Life of Paul, Vol. I., p. 615.

Taking these, then, as our clew, we are conducted at once to the emperor NERO, as the monster in whom all the probabilities of the case meet. He was a person whose character and acts fully entitled him to be called the "Man of Sin," and the "Lawless One." His imperial dignity and resistless power over both Rome and the provinces made him one to be eminently feared throughout the empire; and being such he could not be spoken of in any but the most guarded terms on penalty of treason. And the sequel showed that there were good reasons why the Thessalonians should be admonished of the perils impending over them under his reign and over all the churches. Nero ascended the throne the next year after this epistle was written, and ten years later broke forth in the most terrible persecution against the Christians recorded in history. Well might the prophetic pen of the apostle warn that beloved infant church of the dangers which lay just before them, and bid them strive, by the cultivation of their own faith and steadfastness, to prepare themselves for it, rather than run into extravagances of joy as if already entering on the experience of promises which could not be fulfilled for almost a score of years to come.¹

Assuming this, then, to be the right solution of

¹"It was the common view of the Fathers, that by saying "the mystery of lawlessness doth already work," Paul meant Nero. So say Victorinus, Hilary, Chrysostom, Jerome. Augustine and Theodoret also mention it.—A great many moderns have followed this view,—Lyranus, Erasmus, Gagney, Guiland, Cornelius a Lapide, etc." Dollinger, *First Age of the Church*, Vol. II., p. 61, note.

this much controverted passage, it ceases to be in the slightest degree opposed to the doctrine I have maintained of the early manifestation of the Parousia. I am confident that this interpretation cannot be refuted; I am sure that it is both natural and probable. The very coincidences in time, personal characteristics, acts, and effects, are to say the least, striking; not only not tending to disprove the speedy coming of the Lord, but falling in exactly with the scope of the predictions concerning it, as first given by Christ himself, and afterward repeated by all the apostles.¹

I regard, then, this part of the true doctrine of the Parousia as demonstrated. If the declarations of our Lord and of his apostles, repeated in numberless instances and in the greatest variety of forms, expressly and incidentally, positively and negatively, during the whole period from before the crucifixion to the very eve of the downfall of Jerusalem, always affirming the near approach of the Parousia, never in a single instance saying or implying that it was to be far distant, can establish any truth on immovable foundations, they have established this. Whatever else about the Parousia is unrevealed or obscure, it is not this particular of the *time*,—I mean of course within the specified limits of that “generation.” Not the fact of the Parousia itself is more clearly asserted than this concomitant of it. Not that fact is made more use of “for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,

¹For a fuller exhibition of the view thus presented, the reader is referred to the discussion of this subject by Canon Farrar, in his *Life of Paul*, chap. xxx, and his *Excursus on the Man of Sin*.

for instruction in righteousness," than this element of its speediness. If any other things in or about the doctrine seem inconsistent with this they must be modified to harmonize with it, not it with them. If there be a foundation text in all the Bible where we can build the superstructure of doctrine securely, it is those words of the Lord:—

"VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, THIS GENERATION SHALL NOT PASS AWAY TILL ALL THESE THINGS BE ACCOMPLISHED. HEAVEN AND EARTH SHALL PASS AWAY, BUT MY WORDS SHALL NOT PASS AWAY."

CHAPTER VI.

THE COSTUME OF THE PAROUSIA.

How, then, can the views now exhibited as to the nature, the duration, and the time of the Parousia be made to harmonize with the representations of the Scriptures as to the *manner* in which it should take place? It is declared that it should be attended with sublime physical phenomena; the darkening of the sun and moon, the fall of the stars, the burning of the world, the passing away of the heavens, etc. Did all these things happen eighteen hundred years ago?

In order to answer this inquiry, it is necessary to consider what was the meaning of this language in the prophetic Scriptures, and in the usages of the Jews of Christ's day.

These representations are of two kinds, referring to two distinct things, coincident, indeed, in time but wholly different in their nature; viz.: *the establishment of the new kingdom of heaven*, and *the abolition of the old*.

SECTION I.

THE IMAGERY OF INAUGURATION.

Christ was to come for the purpose of establishing the new kingdom of heaven, and of being inaugu-

rated as its King. How should this event be best set forth to the apprehension of mankind?

• The idea of divine manifestations to men had been familiar to the Jews from the earliest times. To Abraham and Lot, to Isaac and Jacob, God appeared, usually in a human form,—the “Angel-Jehovah”—speaking, eating, and in one case even wrestling, after the manner of men. To Moses in the desert he revealed himself in the burning bush. These, however, were, so to speak, private manifestations. Impressive as they were to the individuals that received them, they were confined to their personal experience, and could have had no wide effect upon the world at large. It was necessary, therefore, in order to establish his special government over a nation, and insure from them the reverence and obedience due to him as their King and Lord, that he should make a public, visible demonstration of his existence and power and majesty. That demonstration took place at Mount Sinai.

Every circumstance that could add to its sublimity was gathered around the scene. The people, by a three months' journey, were led apart from the rest of mankind into the highest, most secluded recesses of the mountains. There, in a broad ravine, shut in on all sides by lofty granite peaks gray with time and splintered and seamed by the storms of ages, they were commanded to prepare for a personal interview with their God. Three days are spent in sanctifying themselves for the great occasion. Around the base of the huge precipice which God was to

make his throne, a line was drawn, beyond which none might pass on pain of instant death. It is only for an inspired pen to describe what followed:—

“It came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.” Ex. 19: 16–20.

The narrative does not state by whom the trumpet was blown, but elsewhere we learn that Jehovah was attended by a countless retinue of angels. In Deut. 33: 2, it is said, “He came with ten thousands of his saints,” i. e., holy ones. “From his right hand went forth a fiery law for them.” The Septuagint has here, “At his right hand the angels with him.” In Ps. 68: 18 we read, “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place.” To the Galatians Paul says the law was “ordained through angels” (ch. 3: 19); and to the Hebrews, that it was “spoken through angels.” ch. 2: 2.

This scene was doubtless the most awe-inspiring

that ever addressed itself to the eye of mortals. "So fearful was the appearance," says Paul, "that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." Heb. 12: 21. It invested the theocratic system then established with a sanctity and authority transcending all human enactments. Often was it referred to by their teachers as bringing the nation under the most solemn obligations to obedience, and, at the same time, as conferring on them the highest honor. "Ask now," said Moses, "of the days that are passed, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it. Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?—Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee, and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his voice out of the midst of the fire." Deut. 4: 33–36. The proto-martyr Stephen, in that recitation of the nation's history which so cut his auditors to the heart and maddened them to murder, charged upon them that notwithstanding they had received the law "as it was ordained by angels," God's ministers at Sinai, they had failed to keep it. And Josephus describes even the able but impious Herod, while engaged in a war with the Arabians who had murdered his ambassadors, as stimulating the ardor of his soldiers by reminding them that they had received their law through the ministry of angels,

who might be regarded as God's ambassadors to mankind. Ant. xv. 5, 3.

Here, then, was the source of that peculiar imagery which ever after was wont to be used in describing the divine manifestations to men, and sometimes even of the ordinary operations of Providence. The Lord comes in the clouds, amid lightnings and thunders; angels in their shining ranks attend him; the mountains shake at his presence; his awful voice is heard uttering law and judgment for the world. A remarkable example of this diction occurs in the eighteenth Psalm, the superscription of which informs us that it was a commemorative offering of praise for the Psalmist's deliverance "from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul." "He bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed,—hailstones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice,—hailstones and coals of fire." Of course, we are not to understand that all this actually occurred in a literal or material sense; it is simply the portrayal of almighty power interposing for the deliverance of David. The real methods in which this was done are shown in the history, which makes no mention of anything supernatural. It is, in a word, the language of *costume*, the full force of

which consists in its conveying the idea of irresistible supreme power.

It is a curious fact, worthy of mention here, that this inauguration of Jehovah as the national sovereign of the Hebrews has been made the pattern after which earthly kings have ordered the ceremonies of their own coronation. Arrayed in royal vestments, with a brilliant retinue of grandees, and an imposing display of his troops, the new sovereign comes forth, with a herald blowing a trumpet before him, and the shouts of the multitudes crying, "God save the king!" See the story of the accession of Solomon (1 Kings 1: 38, 39), and of Jehu (2 Kings 9: 13). Even in modern times, the like ceremonial is observed at the coronation of British sovereigns,—the blowing of the trumpet by the Garter king-at-arms proclaiming the enthroning of the new monarch, and publishing his titles and dignities to the world.

It was in terms thus hallowed by association with the founding of their own divine monarchy, and familiarized to the Jews as the technical phraseology denoting the accession of kings to their thrones,—*the court language of inauguration*, so to speak—that Christ described his coming to men in his kingdom. The one event of their past history most memorable and sublime was the type of the one event of the future to which they were taught to look forward with the intensest interest. The Lord Jesus Christ, now exalted to his promised throne, should appear in the clouds of heaven with all the holy angels, resplendent in flaming fire like the lightnings of Sinai,

with a shout, the voice of an archangel and the trump of God. And as the Hebrew nation had been gathered in solemn expectation around the mountain to receive their King, so before Christ should "be gathered all the nations" (Matt. 25: 32), to receive law and judgment at his mouth. The grand type-scene which introduced the old dispensation lent its glories to grace the grander antitype that should introduce the new.

And not only was the inauguration of a king thus suggested, but that of One in all respects equal in power and glory to himself. It was claiming not only the throne, but all the attending insignia which had bowed the nation in awe and fear at the foot of Mount Sinai. If the sublimest phenomena known to nature could indicate the rank of Him whose coronation they graced, the throne of Jesus should be no whit inferior to that of Jehovah. He who in his own person is the equal of the Father, should be also equal in power and glory, "that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."

Was there then to be, in addition to this high symbolic signification, a fulfillment of this language in a literal sense? I think not.

For first, there is no evidence that, at this period, such was its recognized meaning. We have no reason to suppose that the four disciples who heard our Lord's words on Olivet so understood him. They were familiar with the fact that language like this was constantly used by their prophets as mere costume,—the drapery under which divine manifesta-

tions were set forth. Compare Ex. 34: 5; 2 Sam. 22: 10-12; Ps. 50: 3; 97: 2-5; 104: 3; Isa. 19: 1; 64: 1, 2; Ezek. 1: 4; 10: 4; Dan. 7: 13. They knew that God's deliverance of David from his enemies was not attended by actual earthquakes, an awful form seated on a flying cherub, surrounded by dark clouds from which shot forth mingled hail and fire. They knew, in a word, that all this had come to be figurative language, used to exalt men's impressions of the divine majesty. When applied by our Lord to his coming, its significance lay in the fact that he was to appear as their long-expected Messiah, in a glory befitting his exalted character, and not less worthy of reverence than He whose throne had been established amid the sublimities of Sinai.

So with the apostle Paul. If he had understood that the day of the Lord was to be introduced by a *visible* appearance of Christ in the clouds, why did he not remind the Thessalonians, who thought the day had already come, that such appearance had not taken place? Adventists who are now looking for it, make the fact that no visible coming has yet occurred a proof, to them absolutely conclusive, that the Parousia is yet future. Why did not Paul reason in the same way when he wished to prove the same thing, unless because neither he nor those to whom he wrote had any expectation of the kind?

We are not to forget that the whole Mosaic economy was but a type and prophecy of the new kingdom of heaven, which was to be established by the

Messiah.¹ This is shown at great length in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The tabernacle, its rites, its furniture, and its ministers, were all "figures for the time present"; "shadows of good things to come." And throughout the whole, the method of teaching was from the literal to the figurative, from the material to the spiritual. The sacrificial lamb pointed to the Lamb of God that was to take away the sin of the world; the ministering priest, to Him who offered himself once for all; circumcision, to regeneration; the sprinkling of the victim's blood, to sanctification by the Holy Ghost; the Sabbath, to the "rest that remaineth"; the tabernacle, to the perfected church in which God shall dwell forever. Never is the relation otherwise. The material type is never fulfilled in a material antitype; bloody rite has no bloody rite as its counterpart; no Christian altar answers to Hebrew altar; no earthly Jerusalem, to the Jerusalem that then was, and was in bondage with her children. And so, by all the principles of analogy, as the ancient ritual dispensation was in all its parts symbolical of the new, which is spiritual, so its inauguration with material splendors ought to find its fulfillment in one that is spiritual.

¹ "It necessarily results from the nature of prophecy, that the kingdom of the Messiah should be represented by metaphors taken from the Mosaic dispensation, and that the facts as well as the persons of the former should receive the names of the latter, which were connected with them by an internal resemblance. This mode of representation is founded in the fact that the Mosaic economy was ordered with distinct reference to the Christian dispensation, and prefigures it." Hengstenberg's *Christology*, Vol. I., p. 231.

To look for one appealing to the senses is to reverse all the laws of progress and development in God's revelation to man.

But we have something on the point even more definite than this. Christ was once "asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God cometh." Luke 17: 20. He answered them, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," or as it is in the margin, "with outward show."¹ "Neither shall they say 'Lo here! or there!'"—you are not to expect it in one locality or another²—for lo, the kingdom of God is within³ you." It is in the hearts of men that you are to look for its coming; it is a spiritual, not sensuous kingdom such as you anticipate. This clear and explicit language ought to dispel those gross and carnal views which look for an imposing temporal kingdom established in some earthly locality, and inaugurated by grand sights and sounds, to make men stare, but to win no hearts with the majesty of enthroned truth and love.

¹ "So that its progress may be watched with the eyes." Robinson's *Lex.*, *sub voce*. "None shall be able to point here or there for a proof of its coming." Alford. "What attracts observation." Bloomfield. "Everything that excites observation." Olshausen.

² "The Saviour withdraws the kingdom of God wholly from the local and phenomenal world, and transfers it to the world of spirit." Olshausen.

³ There is a difference of opinion among commentators whether the words *ἐν ὑμῖν* mean *within* you or *among* you. The sense is substantially the same either way.

SECTION II.

THE IMAGERY OF DESTRUCTION.

The coming of our Lord in his Parousia was not only to inaugurate the new dispensation—the kingdom of heaven—but to abolish the old. The old, indeed, had been intended as a preparation for the new, out of which the latter, in the fullness of time, was to unfold, as the perfect flower from the bud which had inclosed and protected it, and for a season it measurably served that purpose. But ultimately, through the grossness of the nation's heart, it proved to be the chief hinderance to the new,—its stony prison instead of its fostering womb. Therefore it became necessary that the former should be utterly destroyed, which could be effected only by destroying the temple which had been its shrine, and the city and nation which clung to it with an idolatrous reverence. Hence a second class of imagery used in describing the event, derived from those natural phenomena which, among unscientific people, have always inspired most awe and fear.

Foremost among these are eclipses of the sun and moon. To this day, millions of men go into agonies of terror when these happen. Showers of falling meteors, or, as they are popularly called, shooting stars, are of the same class, and the recent discovery of the fact that these are periodical proves that they must have been of frequent occurrence before the Christian era. Earthquakes are the terror of every age. Fierce tempests have ever prevailed, especially in warm climates, in which, amid the incessant flashes

of lightning and roar of thunder, it needs no stretch of imagination to believe that the heavens are passing away with a great noise and the elements melting with fervent heat, while the dense masses of whirling clouds seem to be the rolling together of the firmament like a scroll. And then the clearing up that follows!—the sun bursting forth in new splendor from the depths of the serene blue, and the freshness and fragrance and peace that breathe over the smiling landscape prompting the admiring exclamation, “Behold new heavens and a new earth!”

Now, we can make no greater mistake than to interpret the imagery in the Bible derived from these sources after the methods of thought which prevail in our day.¹ Remember that the Jews were Orientals, born under the brilliant skies of the East, and living many centuries before the birth of what we call science. They looked upon and spoke of nat-

¹ “When all the books of the New Testament were written by Jews and among Jews and unto them, and when all the discourses made there were made, in like manner, by Jews and to Jews and among them, I was always fully persuaded, as a thing past all doubting, that that Testament could not but everywhere taste of and retain the Jews’ style, idiom, and rule of speaking. And hence, in the second place, I concluded as assuredly that in the obscurer places of that Testament (which are very many), the best and most natural method of searching out the sense is to inquire how and in what sense those phrases and manners of speech were understood, according to the vulgar and common dialect and opinion of that nation, and how they took them by whom they were spoken, and by whom they were heard. For it is no matter what we can beat out concerning those manners of speech on the anvil of our own conceit, but what they signified among them in their ordinary sense and speech.” Lightfoot, *Hor. Heb.* Vol. II., pp. 3, 4.

ural phenomena as they appeared to the senses. With them the blue concave of the sky was a solid crystalline sphere called the "firmament," the sun, moon, and stars were fixed in that firmament, like gems in their sockets, and revolved with it once a day. The earth was a vast plain built upon solid foundations, and surrounded upon its outer margin by the floods. The rains descended through windows in the firmament; earthquakes were the shaking of the pillars on which the earth rests; volcanoes were the flowing down of the mountains under the wrath of God. The oriental mind, grasping these phenomena with a vivid imagination, wrought them into many forms of glowing imagery to denote whatever was grand or terrific. The Jews were not alone in this, but the same thing was true of all the Eastern nations, Greek, Egyptian, Persian, Indian,—of all, indeed, that have left us a literature.

But we in these western lands and in modern times have become as highly philosophical and practical. We have trained ourselves to look beyond appearances, and investigate ultimate principles and facts. We have learned astronomy and geology. We know that the sky is not solid, that the heavenly bodies are not luminous disks fastened to it, and that the earth is not a plain and has no foundations. To us nature and the universe are totally unlike what they were to the ancients. We neither conceive nor speak of them in the same way. Our words are scientific, literal; after the reality and not the appearance. For us, then, to interpret ancient language

like our own is to plunge into endless incongruity and error. It would be like painting the ancients themselves in modern costume, and making them talk like Prof. Huxley.¹ It is to repeat the folly which condemned Galileo for heresy because he asserted that the earth moved, and has done so much to make scientific skeptics in our own day. It is only when we let the sacred writers speak in their own way, and understand their words as they and their contemporaries did, that we shall learn the truth, as the Holy Spirit designed to give it.

Such were the sources of the imagery which the Hebrew prophets had always been accustomed to employ in predicting the divine judgments upon cities and nations. Look at the thirteenth chapter of Isaiah, which is entitled "The burden of Babylon,"

¹ "The walls of the chapel [in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence] were to be filled from top to bottom with compositions. They are representations of biblical events. That is to say, the names of the different pictures are so called, but in truth we are looking at groups of known and unknown Florentine beauties and celebrities, men, women and children, placed together just as circumstances demanded, in the costume of the period, and in a manner as if that which the picture signified had occurred a few days before in the streets of Florence, or in one of the most well known houses.—Rembrandt makes Mary sit in a stable representing a Dutch cow-house of his time, while Raphael gives her accommodations in old Roman walls, such as he daily passed by." Grimm's *Life of Michael Angelo*, Vol. I., p. 87.

Of the same school was the genius that painted Abraham's servants, in their pursuit of the robbers who had carried off Lot and his family, as *armed with muskets*! I have seen a picture representing Christ's resurrection, showing an old fashioned Yankee meeting-house with steeple and bell standing near by.

and observe in what language the destruction of that city is described. "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.—I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.—Behold I will stir up the Medes against them," etc.

Take the twenty-fourth chapter, which is a prediction of the earlier capture of Jerusalem and the devastation of Palestine, by Sennacherib. "Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.—The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage, and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall and not rise again.—Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

Still more striking is the announcement, in the thirty-fourth chapter, of the divine judgments upon the land of Idumæa. "All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the

leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven ; behold it shall come down upon Idumæa," etc.—“ For it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch ; it shall not be quenched night nor day ; the smoke thereof shall go up forever.”

Nor was language like this confined to one prophet ; it was the common usage of all. See how Ezekiel (ch. 32) threatens Pharaoh, king of Egypt, with an overthrow by Babylon. “ And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven and make the stars thereof dark ; I will cover the sun with a cloud and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God.”

The prophet Joel denounces a plague of locusts upon Palestine in the following terms (ch. 2) : “ Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain ; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand.—The earth shall quake before them ; the heavens shall tremble ; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army,” etc. And the same prophet, speaking of the period immediately before the Parousia of Christ, employs similar language, which Peter on the day of

Pentecost quotes and expressly declares has reference to the events then occurring. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit, etc.—And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come."

With these words of the prophets, then, ringing in our ears, let us go out with the disciples to Olivet and listen to the Master, a greater prophet than they, as he describes to us that Parousia which was to be initiated by the destruction of the beloved city and temple and nation. From our infancy we have been taught these words of doom, and have heard them read in the synagogue service, with the record of their fulfillment, as the *prophetic vernacular* for the overthrow of wicked cities and nations. A half hour ago we heard him pronounce those awful words upon that guilty generation; and from the olive-clad slopes we look yonder upon that glittering pile of marble and gold of which he has said there shall not be one stone left upon another. And when, in answer to our astonished inquiry as to the time and the signs of the catastrophe, we hear him say, "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken"—what is it but the familiar language of prophecy telling us that like as Babylon and Egypt and Idumæa, so Je-

rusalem and the Hebrew nation shall be overthrown? Will any thought of sensible, material phenomena occur to us, any more than in connection with those ancient judgments on wicked nations,—especially when the same voice immediately adds: “Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all these things be accomplished”?

So with the language of Paul, the disciple of Gamaliel and learned in all the Jewish law, when he told the Thessalonians of the “revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God.” (2 Thess. 1: 7, 8). So with the kindred language of Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, writing to churches of converted Jews, that “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up”¹ (2 Pet. 3: 10),—what was all this but the phraseology customarily applied to classes of events which had many times before happened, and which were then about to be repeated? And now, looking back upon it after a lapse of more than eighteen hundred years, what difficulty have we in

¹“He sets forth the destruction of that cursed nation and their city in those terms that Christ hath done (Matt. 24), and that the Scripture doth elsewhere (Deut. 32: 22-24; Jer. 4: 23), namely, as the destruction of the whole world, the heavens passing away, the elements melting, and the earth burned up. And accordingly he speaks of a new heaven and a new earth, from Isa. 65: 17—a new state of the church under the gospel among the Gentiles, when this old world of the Jews’ state should be dissolved.” Lightfoot on 2 Peter.

saying that it was all fulfilled in the overthrow of the sacred city and nation, and of that renowned system of institutions which for fifteen centuries had borne the impress of divine authority, any more than the similar denunciations against Egypt and Babylon and Idumæa and other oppressors of God's people? We do not argue that because the sun, moon and stars were not extinguished and the earth dashed out of her orbit, on that night when Belshazzar was slain, therefore Babylon was not then taken, and its destruction is still to be looked for. Why should we reason thus in regard to that more stupendous judgment which came upon the city which had crucified the Lord and become the bloody persecutor of the saints?

I shall doubtless be told by those who have been accustomed to more sensuous interpretations of the Scripture that I am detracting from the awful grandeur with which they invest the coming of the Lord. But it seems to me far otherwise. For is not the spiritual ever greater than the material? Did the angels who sang over the creation of the world deem the birth of one little babe in a herdsman's stall at Bethlehem an event of less magnitude, or less worthy to be celebrated with heaven's highest anthems?

"'Twas great to call a world from nought;
'Twas greater to redeem."

To blot out the sun and stars; to display a shining form amid the clouds; to shake the heavens with crashing thunderbolts; to let loose the imprisoned fires of the earth and melt it again to ancient chaos,

is but to exercise a physical omnipotence, the lowest form of power, but to set up a kingdom of holiness in the hearts of a sinful race, a kingdom of ideas and principles regnant over the free wills of men, which, in the face of every motive natural to the corrupt heart, or originating in an evil world, or urged by the prince of darkness, holds on its conquering way from age to age, subduing not only individual souls, but opinions, customs, laws, philosophies, and all the forces that move society and the world, is to exert a grander power, an omnipotence of a higher nature and ampler resources and a more god-like beneficence. It is only because we are so much creatures of sense, and have attained to so little spiritual discernment, that we are ever most impressed with outward glare and noise.

Let me refer to an event of our own day. A plain man, in a quiet apartment, takes his pen and in a few simple words makes four millions of slaves free! How does the whole world thrill with the sublimity of that act of justice! Gather all the grand physical phenomena of these eighteen centuries,—all the eclipses and star-showers and volcanic eruptions and earthquakes and tempests, and how much less do they all together signify than this! How much less thought of and talked about; how much less have they affected the destinies of men and of nations; how much smaller the space they will occupy on the page of human history! No,—thoughts, principles, truths, are alone sublime. If we had a spiritual language which was the pure efflux and fitting expres-

sion of spiritual ideas, we should never have had to come down to matter and sense to find words to set forth the glory of Christ's Presence among men. Let us not, because we are thus compelled, insist that the material and sensuous is greater than the spiritual. No outward event of history was ever so sublime as the inauguration scene at Sinai. And yet says the apostle, "If the ministration of death written and engraven on stones came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face, which glory was passing away, how shall not rather the ministration of the Spirit,—the introduction and carrying forward of the spiritual kingdom of Christ—be with glory?" 2 Cor. 3: 7.

PART II.

CHRIST AS KING.

THUS was Christ's Parousia to be commenced among men. He who first came in the flesh in a state of humiliation and suffering, to die a shameful death as a sacrifice for sin, was now to come a second time in glory, and establish henceforth his abiding PRESENCE with his people. And the whole course of human affairs thereafter, both prophetic, as delineated in the Scriptures, and providential, as developed in the history of the church and the world, was what should occur under that Presence.

The outline of that history is, I conceive, comprehensively sketched in the closing part of our Lord's great discourse on the Mount of Olives. Having stated so fully the signs and the time of his coming, he proceeds to describe the purpose of it, in other words, *what shall be when he comes*.

I beg leave to protest here against the treatment to which this discourse is so generally subjected by severing the concluding portion, in Matt. 23: 31-46, from the rest, and interposing between the two an interval of time of unknown ages. The reason for this, of course, is because it is assumed that the latter portion relates solely to the general judgment, at

the end of the world. But no assumption, I submit, can warrant a procedure which is a violation of the very plainest principles of interpretation. The unity of every discourse ought to be presumed unless there are some clear proofs that the author intended otherwise. Nothing of the sort appears here. So entirely are all marks or indications wanting of a change from the subject with which our Lord began, that of the numerous commentators who insist that the change was made, almost no two agree as to the place of it.


Besides, the subject *in its very terms* continues the same, viz., "the coming of the Lord in glory," nor is there the least intimation that it is not *that* coming the date of which should be in that existing generation. Nay, the concluding portion of the discourse is expressly linked to the former portion by the connective words "when" and "then," which forbid the supposition that different eras are intended. "*When* the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, *then* shall he sit," etc. Compare similar expressions elsewhere. "If I depart I will send the Comforter unto you; and *when* he is come, he will reprove the world of sin," etc. Will not that be at the *time* of his coming? "I will go on by you into Spain." "And I know that *when* I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ." Rom. 15: 28. Had the apostle different periods in his mind when he wrote this? Surely not. Without the supposed necessity, derived from the language employed, of referring this part

of it to the future, no one would have thought, on exegetical grounds, of thus treating a discourse which has throughout the most logical and closely compacted structure. I trust it will be shown that even such application of it does not render that treatment necessary.

Christ's Presence, then, in the world, beginning in that generation and set forth under imagery so imposing, was to be the presence of its KING. "Then shall he *sit on the throne* of his glory." The phrase "to sit upon" is the appropriate one to denote accession to power, as when we familiarly say of a monarch, "He ascends the throne." It is not that he assumes that dignity to perform a single work only, viz., the judgment, but it is to *begin a reign* which it is elsewhere declared shall have no end. This is that "kingdom of heaven" which had been so long and so fondly anticipated; the one described by Daniel, whose sublime prophecy, we cannot doubt, was the prototype of the scene here depicted by Christ himself. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

It is to be remarked, that this was to be the advent of a *conquering* King. His realm was a world in

revolt against its Maker and rightful Sovereign, and the special object of his reign was to restore it to its allegiance. By far the larger portion, we believe, will be constrained to receive him as their Lord, and become his loving and obedient people. Some, alas, will refuse, and be rejected from his favor. The great instigator and prince of the rebellion, with his forces and allies, will be defeated and brought to nought. Hence the imagery under which he is most usually described is that of a victorious King. "I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Ps. 2: 8, 9. "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all those kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2: 44. "Behold a white horse, and He that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness doth he judge and make war." Rev. 20: 11. "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." 1 Cor. 15: 25. And even when that grand consummation is reached, and the sword and bow of conquest are returned to the Father, it will be only to be superseded by the higher scepter of love, which shall rule over the obedient and happy universe forever.



CHAPTER I.

HIS ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.


THIS is expressly affirmed to have taken place at his ascension. Mark 16 : 19. "After he had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and *sat down at the right hand of God.*" It was the well-known expression employed in the second Psalm to signify the exaltation of the promised Messiah to his royal dignity as King in Zion. The same fact was affirmed by Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2 : 33), and by Stephen as revealed to his direct vision immediately before his martyrdom. Acts 7 : 55. In the epistles also it is repeatedly declared. Heb. 1 : 3. "Who—when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. 10 : 12. "He, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made the footstool of his feet." Heb. 8 : 1. "We have such a high priest who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Heb. 12 : 2. "And hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." 1 Peter 3 : 22. "Who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven ; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." Phil. 2 : 9–11. "God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above

every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Eph. 1: 20-23. "He raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

These and many more passages of a similar character clearly establish the fact that Christ's actual assumption of his throne took place at the time indicated, viz., within that generation. In other words, his reign then *began*.

Hence it follows that we are not to look for another beginning of it in the future. Whatever enlargement there may be of it, whatever new accessions of power and glory, they will not be the introduction of a new kingdom, but epochs in one already established. There is but one kingdom of Christ; that has begun, and is not to be begun again.

It follows, further, that the *place* of his throne, the capital, so to speak, of his kingdom, is in *heaven*. The language I have cited, it seems to me, is entirely incompatible with the idea of a visible, temporal reign of Christ on earth. We do not indeed know where heaven is; if locality is to be predicated of



what is so purely spiritual, it may be near to or remote from the earth ; but so much at least is certain that it is in the invisible sphere. Heaven, the right hand of God, the Majesty on high, the heavenly places, are not in this world of sense. It is in them that Christ is enthroned ; there he has sat down forever. He will not change that throne for one in Jerusalem ; he will not remove from the invisible and celestial sphere to a visible and terrestrial one.

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST COMING IN HIS KINGDOM.

It has been shown in a previous chapter that the word coming can only be used of a divine being in the sense of *manifestation*. The accession of our Lord to his throne, at his ascension, was speedily followed by that wonderful event which first disclosed to men his kingly power, and initiated among them his visible kingdom.

“Next to the appearance of the Son of God on earth,” says Neander, “this was the greatest event, as the commencing point of the new divine life proceeding from him to the human race, which has since spread and operated through successive ages, and will continue to operate until its final object is attained, and all mankind are transformed into the image of Christ.”¹

The day of Pentecost—the day which commemorated the giving of the law at Sinai, and the institution of the first kingdom of heaven—had come. Jerusalem was full of people, not its own citizens alone, but from all parts of Palestine and surrounding countries, who had come hither to attend the national festival. Suddenly a sound is heard as of a mighty tempest, filling the city with alarm and causing a vast concourse to run together. Lambent

¹ Planting and Training, p. 18.

flames descend and rest on the heads of the apostles, and with loud voices they speak in languages they had never learned. It was a stupendous phenomenon; and no wonder the thoughtful were amazed and were in doubt, saying one to another, "What meaneth this?" Then Petér, filled with the Holy Ghost, stands forth and explains the event. "The days are come," said he, "predicted by Joel; the Spirit of God is poured out; the wonders in heaven and signs on the earth appear, marking the close of the old age and the beginning of the new; Jesus, whom ye crucified, has ascended to his throne, and hath poured forth this which ye see and hear; that all the house of Israel may know assuredly that God hath made him BOTH LORD AND CHRIST." How thrilling these words, addressed to that awe-stricken crowd! Three thousand were convinced, and accepted on the spot their manifested King.

A few days afterward, the lame man lying at the Beautiful Gate was healed; and the apostles being called to account for the fact again referred it to the power of the risen and glorified Jesus, and besought the people to repent, that the days of refreshing, of which this was but a twilight gleam, might fully come, and the Lord might return in his power to bless them and all nations. Being released from their confinement, they seek again the society of the believers, and together sing the second Psalm, the coronation anthem of the Messiah, who was thus manifesting himself in power as the Saviour and King of men.

But another and different exhibition of that power was needed in those beginnings of the Messianic days. We have seen that Christ was to reign in the two-fold capacity of king and judge; not merely to bestow blessings upon his friends, but to destroy and punish his enemies. Just then happened the sad episode of Annas and Sapphira, by which was shown that the newly enthroned Lord whom they worshiped was arrayed in frowns for the false and disobedient, and that no scheme of sin could deceive his omniscience or presume on his indulgence.

Thus, then, it was that Christ began to *come* in his kingdom. A new power began to be felt among men, confounding the politicians and rulers of that day,—one which no decrees could arrest, no cunning plots could circumvent, no force could resist. That power made itself visible and tangible, not indeed to the outward senses of men, but to their spiritual apprehensions, producing effects which all the éclat of his bodily presence and of his innumerable miracles wrought in the flesh had failed to achieve. Still, as yet no outward kingdom was set up. The converts did not leave the national synagogues or temple. They kept the feasts, observed the Sabbath, circumcised their children, and were in all visible seeming Jews, still under the forms of the ancient *aion*, and still accustomed to expect and to speak of the *aion to come*. One more great event was requisite to complete the Lord's advent, to establish his Parousia, and give a visible inauguration of his kingdom.

And such event happened, just as he had said it

would, in that generation. Jerusalem, the city of David, the capital of the Jewish state, with its sacred temple, the shrine and sanctuary of the Jewish church, was laid low. A siege, the most bloody that the pen of history was ever called to describe, attended with horrors which no pen could adequately depict, yet in its minutest details singularly fulfilling a long line of ancient prophecies,—a siege in which, according to Josephus, a million and a quarter of people perished, ended forever the ancient dispensation, both as a civil and religious system. Then it was that the Christian church, emerging from the ashes of the old theocracy, and armed both with miraculous power and the faith and zeal of that martyr age, went forth on her appointed mission to subdue the world to her King. Then it was that the kingdom of God came with power, and Christ came in his kingdom. The world looked with dismay upon that tragedy; and though many were too blinded by ignorance and unbelief to discern its full import, yet *every eye* did *see it* (Rev. 1 : 7); and since then, for eighteen hundred years, the gaze of the world has rested upon it, as the clear showing forth of the awful majesty of Christ, the rejected King of the Jews, yet none the less the Lord, the Judge, who thus came to men in the glory of his Father, and began among them that kingdom which is ultimately to subdue all other kingdoms and fill the earth with his glory.¹

¹“All generations travail in birth with one greater than themselves. The great man is not yet come, he is always coming. The Son of Man has come? Yes, but not in his glory.

“It was to this event,” says Canon Farrar, “the most awful in history, ‘one of the most awful eras in God’s economy of grace, and the most awful revolution in all God’s religious dispensations’ (Warburton), that we must apply those prophecies of Christ’s coming in which every one of the apostles and evangelists describe it as *near at hand*. To those prophecies our Lord himself fixed these three most definite limitations,—the one, that before that generation passed away all these things would be fulfilled (Matt. 24: 34); another, that some standing there should not taste death till they saw the Son of Man coming in his kingdom (Matt. 16: 28); the third, that the apostles should not have gone over the cities of

Christ has come? Yes, but in his everyday clothes, to begin his work, to give the earnest of his blood—but he is always coming. That was the explanation of apostolic fire and unquenchable enthusiasm, and it must be the explanation of the inspiring force under which our own life is stirred and whirled in its daily course. I am always looking for and hastening the coming of Jesus Christ. He will never come as a man. He will come with a new coming, wider and more beautiful and satisfying than as a visible figure. Let those explain the meaning of such terms who have felt what it is to have the heart move to apprehensions and seizures of realities for which there are no words. ‘Thy kingdom come.’ Do I thus pray for some great square figure to fall out of the blue heavens, and establish itself upon wheels to roll round the earth? I pray, rather, for the infinite domination of ideas, purposes, and intentions of the most elevated and sacred kind. When Christianity comes, Christ will come; when the spirit of self-sacrifice has established itself upon the earth, then tell the heavens that the arrival has been completed, and that earth is just outside of heaven, sunned with all its light, and made tuneful with all its music.” Dr. Joseph Parker, “These Sayings of Mine.”

Israel till the Son of Man be come (Matt.10:23). It is strange that these distinct limitations should not be regarded as a decisive proof that the Fall of Jerusalem was, in the fullest sense, the Second Advent of the Son of Man, which was primarily contemplated by the earliest voices of prophecy." *Early Days*, p. 489.

CHAPTER III.

THE KINGDOM LIKE A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED.

THE coming of Christ in his kingdom was not a single event, fully accomplished by one act at a certain definite moment; it was rather a *process* reaching over a considerable period of time. It was not an immediate violent destruction of the ancient system, but the planting in it of a *seed*. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; which, indeed, is less than all seeds, but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof." "It is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." Matt. 13: 31-33. "It is as if a man should cast seed upon the earth, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how." Mark 4: 26, 27. This fact, so familiar to us as a principle of Christ's kingdom, is of great importance to the right understanding of its earliest history, as it is to the right interpretation of its record on the sacred page.

One result is, that we find ourselves at a loss to fix definitely the date of its founding, and even that there are apparent contradictions in the representations made on that subject. Sometimes the Parousia

seems to be regarded as having been inaugurated on the day of Pentecost, for surely then Christ first came to men in the glory of his new dignity as "made both Lord and Christ." The book of Acts is a history of the planting and training of the earliest churches, which collectively constituted the new kingdom of heaven. The teachings of the apostles instructed them in its principles and duties, as of something already instituted. They speak of Christ as "having sat down upon his throne" (Heb. 1: 3); as "exalted above all principality and power, and made head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1: 20-23); as having begun a reign which must continue "till he hath put all things under his feet" (1 Cor. 15: 25); etc. At other times the Parousia is spoken of as future. Our Saviour himself in Matt. 24, undoubtedly assigned it to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem; and as this did not occur till after all the epistles were written, it was to be expected that these should always speak of it in the same way. Why this apparent contradiction? What consistency is there in their putting that important date sometimes on the day of Pentecost, and sometimes forty years later?


The explanation, I think, is to be found in the fact just adverted to, of the minuteness of the beginnings of the kingdom. It was "less than all seeds," so that its real character was not at first declared or even discerned. It was not till after the fall of Jerusalem and the utter abolition of the Mosaic system, that the true nature of the great revolution

through which they were passing was fully comprehended by any.

The events of the day of Pentecost, significant as they were, produced no immediate change in the outward aspects of things. No alteration took place in the public rites of religion. The temple and synagogue services were attended by the Christian converts, as they had always been; circumcision, the passover, the Sabbath, the daily sacrifice, the laws of ceremonial cleanness, and the like, were continued as before. The kingdom of God "came not with observation."

Neither did it make any change in the outward relations of men. The apostles were Jews; the first converts were Jews; regarded as such by themselves and recognized as such both by their own countrymen and by the Gentiles. The jurisdiction of the Sanhedrim and the authority of the priests and elders were everywhere unquestioned.

Thus, therefore, the change which had been wrought in the spiritual relations of mankind was for a long time but imperfectly understood. It was precisely the same as it had been in respect to the advent of Christ in the flesh, the fact and the significance of which were fully comprehended by none up to the very hour of his death. When Peter made his memorable declaration in Cæsarea Philippi, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," he was pronounced specially blessed in having had revealed to him from the Father what no man could have taught him. So as to the Second Advent,—



the fact and its nature. The apostles, though inspired, were not thereby made omniscient. It took eight years and a special message from heaven to teach Peter that he might receive a Gentile into the church, much more, eat with him. It was twenty years before the Council at Jerusalem reached the point that it was not necessary for Gentile converts to be circumcised and keep the law. It was not till the very eve of the fall of Jerusalem that the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse were given to the church, which then for the first time taught fully and plainly the abrogation of the ancient dispensation and its impending violent overthrow. In other words, revelation as to the Parousia, as well as to the coming of Christ in the flesh, was *progressive*.

While, then, the city and temple and all the rites of the old dispensation stood to outward appearance unchanged, it was not possible for the apostles, without a higher degree of illumination than was at first granted them, to speak of this epoch in any other than its outward aspects. Those forty years, from the ascension to the fall of Jerusalem, were in reality a gestating period of the church. The transition was not a *revolution* but a *birth*. The new kingdom of Christ, though a fact and a power, was yet in the matrix of the old one. It was not given to those of that day to know and to speak of it in all its relations, as we who have been taught by the completed volume of the New Testament and by the after light of history can do. He who clothes the trees with their vernal blossoms knows all their beauty and fra-

grance while they are as yet inclosed in the bud. Men know them only when, in the fullness of time, they burst into bloom. To say that they began at the blossoming is not to deny the scientific fact that they began to be when the germ-cell was developed months before. To affirm the latter is not to lay one's self open to the charge of inconsistency in affirming the former.

We can attain, then, clear and consistent views of this subject only as we bear in mind the *gradualness of the transition* from the old dispensation to the new. The importance of that fact is generally but little appreciated. It is in this alone that we find an adequate explanation of many things in the beginning of Christianity, such as the constitution, patterned after the synagogue, of the first churches, the nature and powers of church officers, forms of worship, etc. Whately refers to this at length in his second "Essay on the Kingdom of Heaven." Neander speaks of it as "the most remarkable feature in the spread of Christianity." The providential reasons of it are not hard to discern.

1. The transition thus became comparatively easy and natural. In no other way would it have been possible for a religious system so venerable and idolized as Judaism to be supplanted by another. If the Twelve had been directed to proclaim the immediate abolition of the temple service, the passover, circumcision, the sabbath, and all those things which the Jews believed made them God's peculiar people, they would have shocked every instinct of the nation.

Not a convert would they ever have made; nay, they would have been summarily put to death as felons, enemies to God and man. Such are not God's ways in the natural or moral world. Every new independent life is preceded by an embryonic period, in which it is held till it acquires sufficient maturity to maintain a separate existence of its own.

2. In this way the old dispensation was made not only the natural but the foster-mother of the new. St. John represents her in Rev. 12, as the woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, who was to bring forth the Man-child that was to rule the nations with a rod of iron. Our Lord himself, the apostles and the first converts, were all from her bosom. Her temple-courts were their first sanctuary for worship; her synagogues, both in Judæa and throughout the empire, their places for preaching the gospel. The converts on the day of Pentecost became Christ's messengers to carry the word to their homes in "every nation under heaven." The law itself was a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. The knowledge of God, the sacred Scriptures, the prophecies which foretold the new and glorious reign of the Messiah, and the whole system of symbolic rites, contained the first *rudiments* (the *stoicheia*, Col. 2: 8, 20; Gal. 4: 3, 9; 2 Pet. 3: 10, 12) of Christianity itself. They inshrined that interior, unchangeable essence of the law, which Christ came not to destroy but to fulfill,—to eliminate from the husks of Phariseism and re-enact as the vital prin-

ciple of his new kingdom. Thus the transition, as I have said, was not to be a *revolution*, but a *birth*. The mother might, indeed, be, as she was, cruel, and like other fierce natures ready to devour her offspring, nevertheless she was compelled to *be* a mother, from whose savage bosom the infant church was nursed until it attained a vigorous and independent life of its own.

3. The same prolonged connection with the mother church secured for it also external protection. For many years, nearly or quite down to the fall of Jerusalem, the Christians were regarded as Jews, and shared in the immunities conceded by all the Gentile nations to that ancient people. Says Gibbon, "By the wise dispensation of Providence, a mysterious veil was cast over the infancy of the church, which, till the faith of the Christians was matured, and their numbers increased, served to protect them not only from the malice but even from the knowledge of the heathen world. The slow and gradual abolition of the Mosaic ceremonies afforded a safe and innocent disguise to the more early proselytes of the gospel. As they were, for the greater part, of the race of Abraham, they were distinguished by the peculiar mark of circumcision, offered up their devotions in the temple of Jerusalem till its final destruction, and received both the law and the prophets as the genuine inspirations of the Deity. The Gentile converts who, by a spiritual adoption, had been associated to the hope of Israel, were likewise confounded under the garb and appearance of

Jews, and as the holy theists paid less regard to articles of faith than to the external worship, the new sect which carefully concealed or faintly announced its future greatness and ambition was permitted to shelter itself under the general toleration which was granted to an ancient and celebrated people in the Roman empire." In this way Rome became the protector of the church from the Jews themselves. "The innocence of the first Christians was protected by ignorance and contempt, and the tribunal of the pagan magistrate often proved their most assured refuge against the fury of the synagogue."¹

Thus vital, then, it was to the successful introduction of Christianity that the transition to it from Judaism should be gradual, covering forty years from the ascension to the fall of Jerusalem. "How," says Ulhorn, "could the youthful Christianity possibly have made its way through the unyielding rock-like mass of heathenism without the *Diaspora* (the Jewish dispersion)? Now it found channels everywhere cut, a network of canals extending over the whole Roman empire, and was able to diffuse itself rapidly in every direction. Knowing the chief seats of Judaism, we know already in advance the chief seats of early Christianity. Everywhere the ways were made ready for it, the centers determined. Moreover, we should remember that the privileges were at first of service to the Christian church. So long as Christianity was regarded by the heathen as a Jewish sect, it appears to have been tolerated by

¹Decline and Fall, Chapter 16.

them. Judaism served as a protecting sheath for the young plant till it had gained sufficient strength to endure the storms."—p. 90.

It is thus with the utmost confidence that I explain the apparent inconsistency of sometimes speaking of the Parousia as having begun at the ascension, and sometimes at the destruction of Jerusalem.¹ During that period of forty years the two dispensations, in some sense, overlapped each other. A given event in it might be said to have been in the one or in the other, or even in both. In strict accuracy of thought, the Parousia began at the ascension; but this fact in all its reach and comprehensiveness was not understood till after the visible end of the old dispensation in the destruction of Jerusalem. It was because that at the latter date the new kingdom of heaven became conspicuously visible, and the power and glory of the Lord became manifest to the whole world, that the time of his coming was popularly assigned to that date. We who have been taught by the history of those events and by the completed New Testament are able to see more clearly than the men of that day did the true relations of things, and to use either date interchangeably, without contradiction or confusion. So, doubtless, will it be in the future. God's providence is ever the interpreter of his word, and will, as the coming ages pass, shed more and more

¹ "Christ's dominion begins indeed, spiritually, with his own resurrection and sitting on the right hand of God; but it appears perfected only at the Parousia, which therefore is the same with the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. Acts 1: 7." Olshausen on 1 Cor. 15: 23.

light on all that have gone before, till in the grand consummation we may attain the only perfect view of the completed whole, and "may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."

CHAPTER IV.

PERSECUTION.

SCARCELY had the new kingdom of heaven been founded before it was attacked by persecution. If its weakness shielded it for a time from foreign foes, it did not avert the malice of its enemies at home. As its corner stone was laid in the death of its Founder, so its superstructure was built up and cemented in the blood of his followers who laid down their lives for his sake.

This feature of the kingdom had long been predicted, and was one of its distinguishing characteristics. "The kings of the earth," said David, "set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us" (Ps. 2: 2, 3). "They will deliver you up to councils," said Christ, "and in their synagogues they will scourge you; yea, and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.—And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 10: 17-22). "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14: 22). "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:

12). Hence another proof that the institution set up at the day of Pentecost was the true "kingdom of heaven" that should be inaugurated at Christ's coming. If that kingdom is still future,—the kingdom of the so-called millennium,—it can never be a persecuted one, for, by the supposition, the enemies of its king are then all destroyed.

The prophetic history of these persecutions is given us in the book of Revelation. I cannot pretend to fathom all the mysteries contained in that portion of the sacred volume, nor is this the place to enter into the many controverted questions which have been discussed respecting it. After many years' study of it, I have come very decidedly to the conviction that the general view of its contents and of the mode of its interpretation presented us in the Commentary of Prof. Stuart, is, with some modifications, the true one. No other which I have seen seems so consonant with sound reason, and with the true principles which should guide in the exposition of prophecy. I believe it is growing in favor among the ablest scholars both in Europe and America.¹

The leading design of the Revelation; according to his view is thus stated. "John wrote to console and admonish and encourage the churches, then bleeding at every pore under the glittering weapons of a bloodthirsty tyrant. And what does he do in order to accomplish his purpose? He assures the

¹ The following may be named as having expressed views very nearly accordant with this: Prof. Reuss, Düsterdieck, Canons Geikie and Farrar, Macdonald, Schaff, Cowles.

churches that this dreadful contest is not always to continue. Ere long victory will perch on the banners of the cross. The church will not become extinct by all which tyrants can do, but will rise from its ruinous state, will expand, will fill the world with its triumphs, and prostrate in the dust all who lift up a hand against it. To crown all, he looks with a prophetic eye through the vista of distant ages, and sees that the setting sun of the church militant, and the old age of the world in which it dwells will be glorious; and finally that the New Jerusalem will be her abode through ages that have no end. Short, indeed, and mere outlines, are the descriptions of all that belongs to the *distant* future. But they serve to finish the picture which John had begun, and thus to complete the measure of consolation and encouragement which he designed to administer.”¹

Before I attempt to illustrate this view of the Revelation in its application to the subject before us, let us glance for a moment at the records of history as to the persecutions which have in fact been waged against Christianity.

Those persecutions have sprung, for the most part, from three sources, Jewish, Pagan, and Mohammedan. I do not include the dissensions which have arisen in the Christian body itself, between different branches or sects, which, though resulting too often in bloodshed, cannot be designated as assaults upon Christianity. Nor would I be understood as comprehending every local or casual outbreak of hostility

¹Stuart, Vol. I., pp. 207, 208.

which has been encountered by the gospel in its progress during these eighteen centuries. The classification is general, yet embracing within it all that has sufficient importance to be named in such a connection.

The first of these persecutions was waged by Judaism, the ancient and now apostate theocracy which, blinded by spiritual pride, and eagerly looking for a sensuous kingdom which should restore its former prestige, rejected and attempted to destroy the real kingdom which God had promised. I need not dwell upon its details; they are recorded in the New Testament, and are familiar to all readers. Beginning with the crucifixion of its own Messiah, this malignant persecutor pursued the infant church with relentless hostility for forty years, till its career was cut short by its own retributive destruction.

The second was inflicted by Paganism, then enthroned on the seven hills of imperial Rome. The ancient policy of the mistress of the world toward different religions had been one of toleration, and no sect was molested by law so long as it did not interfere with the public peace.¹ But this policy, under the lawless cruelty of the emperor Nero, was abandoned. Detected in his wanton crime of setting the city on fire, he meanly sought to avert odium from himself by charging the crime upon the Christians, and proceeded to let loose upon them the most fearful outrages. From that time till the abdication of Diocletian, A.D. 303, historians commonly reckon ten

¹ Mosheim, *Ecc. Hist.*, Vol. I., 1, 8.

such persecutions,¹ in which both at Rome and in the provinces every effort possible was put forth to extirpate the new religion, but in vain. The heroic constancy of the sufferers proved the most effective preaching of its doctrines, and it soon passed into a proverb that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.

The third general assault upon Christianity was from Mohammedanism. The founder of this great religious power, indeed, both inculcated and practiced toleration. He recognized Christ as a true prophet, and the Scriptures as a revelation from God, and though his faith was propagated by the sword, yet its violence was turned against pagans and idolaters rather than against Jews or Christians.² Even the two great Saracen empires of the Caliphs in the East and the Moors in the West, though often at war with the Christian nations, had little ability to molest the church as a whole. So long as Rome, now professedly at least a Christian empire, maintained its power, Christianity was safe under its protection. It was not until the fourteenth century, upon the rise of the Ottoman Empire of the Turks, who captured Constantinople and overran the larger portions of Asia and Europe, that the Crescent acquired domina-

¹ "The ancient history of the church does not support precisely this number, for if we reckon only the general or more severe persecutions they were fewer than ten; but if we include the provincial and more limited persecutions, the number will be much greater than ten." Mosheim, *Ecc. Hist.*, I., 5, 4.

² See this subject fully treated in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. Chapter II.

tion over the Cross. Thenceforward the scenes of the ancient persecutions were renewed; the most inhuman cruelties were practiced upon those who were denounced as infidels and dogs. They were robbed, were sold into slavery, and butchered without mercy, until the name of Turk became the synonym of all that was feared or abhorred throughout Christendom.

Taking, then, as our guide, these known facts in the actual history of persecution, let us see what light they throw upon the interpretation of its prophetic history as given us in this book.

SECTION I.

FROM JUDAISM.

The Jewish persecution is represented by our Lord, in his discourse on Olivet, as preceding the destruction of Jerusalem. We cannot doubt that the same prediction, in an expanded form, is set forth in the Apocalypse, chaps. 6-11. Nor is this conviction at all shaken by the objection that the book may have been written after that catastrophe. This is a question in regard to which there are and doubtless will continue to be different opinions. It is freely acknowledged that the weight of external testimony is in favor of the later date, while the internal evidence seems even more decisively to point to the earlier one, viz., about A.D. 67, during the reign of the Emperor Nero. But even conceding the former opinion, I see nothing in it to forbid the reference of

this portion of the book to the period of the Jewish persecutions. If the object of the writer was to console the churches then suffering under the tyrannies of Domitian, he might well do so by first depicting the overthrow of their earlier enemy in Judæa. In other words, the scope of a book in the main prophetic does not preclude occasional passages which are retrospective. In this way the course of God's dealings with the foes of his church may be exhibited as a whole, and the scenes of the future become doubly impressive in the light shed upon them from the past.

But for myself, I feel compelled to give a preponderating weight to the internal evidence of the date of this book,¹ which, as already remarked, would fix it in the reign of Nero, and before the destruction of Jerusalem. In chapter 6, the red horse, symbolizing war, the black horse, famine, and the pale horse, pestilence, are the counterpart of the same woes described in Matt. 24: 6, 7. The souls of the martyrs disclosed under the fifth seal as lying at the foot of the altar are the victims of the cruelties enumerated in Matt. 24: 9-13. The opening of the sixth seal presents to us the same phenomena, the darkening of the sun and moon, the falling of the stars, etc., which are set forth in Matt. 24: 29, 30. The sealing of the hundred and forty-four thousand is the gath-

¹ See a well prepared summary of the argument by Dr. J. M. Macdonald in the *Bib. Sac.*, Vol. XXVI., pp. 457-486. So Geikie, Farrar, Fremantle, and many others. Schaff, in the second edition of his *Eccles. History*, avows a change of opinion in favor of this conclusion.

ering of the elect in Matt. 24: 31. Chapters 8 and 9 are a vivid pictorial representation in detail of the "great tribulation" that should come upon Jerusalem and Judæa immediately preceding the overthrow of the city. We are not to look, of course, for minute correspondences in single events. It is picture and symbol throughout, designed to teach us in general the fearful humiliation and destruction of the power which had persecuted the church, and set itself in array against her King. The seventh trumpet, in chapters 10: 7—11: 15, brings us to the consummation, when the mystery of God should be finished, and the new kingdom of the Messiah, which is to be supreme over all the kingdoms of the earth, is established, and which is to continue forever.

The striking correspondence between our Lord's discourse in Matthew and this portion of the Apocalypse is thus noticed by Dean Alford, and is the more convincing since he holds to the later date of the book.

"The close connection between our Lord's prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives and the line of Apocalyptic prophecy cannot fail to have struck every student of Scripture. If it be suggested that such connection may be merely apparent, and we subject it to the test of more accurate examination, our first impression will, I think, become continually stronger that the two being revelations from the same Lord concerning things to come, and those things being, as it seems to me, bound by the four-fold 'Come' which introduces the seals to the same

reference to Christ's coming, must, corresponding as they do in order and significance, answer to one another in detail, and thus the discourse in Matt. 24 becomes, as Mr. Isaac Williams has truly named it, '*the anchor of apocalyptic interpretation*,' and I may add the touchstone of apocalyptic systems." Com. Vol. IV., p. 249.

SECTION II.

FROM PAGANISM.

The second class of persecutions waged against the Kingdom of Christ was that of Paganism. The delineation of it is believed to have been made in Revelation, chapters 12-20.

The principal characters engaged in this tragedy are portrayed with wonderful power. First there appears a great, bloody-hued, seven-headed Dragon, horned and crowned, whose sinuous tail sweeps over a third part of the heavens, dislodging the stars from their spheres. That there may be no doubt as to who is intended by it we are told that it represents "the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world." He is the prime instigator of the persecution. Next there arises out of the sea a hideous Beast, of monstrous form, armed with whatever is terrible of horns and fangs and claws, to whom the Dragon, his patron, gives "power and a throne and great authority." He is the symbol of a mighty empire yielding itself to be the instrument of Satan in the bloody work he

is about to initiate. An enigmatical designation, calculated to conceal its meaning from the enemies of the Christians, yet of easy solution by "him that hath understanding" of the cabalistic use of the Hebrew numerals shows him in the person of the reigning emperor,¹ to be NERO.² A second monster,

¹ The empire and the emperor, in the somewhat free method of the representation, are identical. Thus Gebhardt: "As he (John) sees in an individual king the nature of a definite empire uniting in itself all other empires personified, so also he sees infolded in this empire the nature of that individual king; this king is to him the empire in person; this empire is to him the king in the form of a kingdom." Doct. of the Apoc., p. 221. That this Greek word βασιλεύς is used to signify both king and emperor, is familiar to all scholars.

² See an account of the *Gematria* or "Science of figures," as used by the Jewish Rabbis, in Geikie's *Life of Christ*, Vol. I., pp. 256, 570. "In the book of Revelation the name of the Beast is veiled from common eyes by the mystical number 666, but the reason for its being so becomes very apparent when we find that it is a cypher for the letters of the name of Nero." Thus

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} N & R & O & N & K & S & R \\ 50 & + & 200 & + & 6 & + & 50 & + & 100 & + & 60 & + & 200 = 666. \end{array}$$

"Neron Kesar (Nero the Emperor) was apparently the name by which the Christians of Asia spoke of the monster. Thus the coins of Asia bore the legend, NERON KAISAR, the form of the mystic number. There are inscriptions at Palmyra in which Nero's name and dignity are written *exactly* as in the cypher in the Apocalypse.—De Vogue's *Syrie Centrale*, etc. 1868, pp. 17, 26."

Irenæus preferred some word in the Greek language, and suggested ΑΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ, the Latin. Thus

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} A & A & T & E & I & N & O & \Sigma \\ 30 & + & 1 & + & 300 & + & 5 & + & 10 & + & 50 & + & 70 & + & 200 = 666. \end{array}$$

Many modern scholars accept this. Gebhardt suggests that both may be correct, "that by its double meaning it might mean the Roman Empire as well as Cæsar Nero."

less formidable in aspect than the other, but endowed with infernal cunning and wonder-working skill, springs out of the earth and joins the Dragon and the Beast in their conspiracy against the saints of God. He is evidently the symbol of the Pagan religion, with its splendid array of priests and augurs and magical rites, with which the established cultus of the empire holds captive the minds of men.

Well may we shudder at such a trio of foes arrayed against the church, and to read that "it was given to him (the Beast) to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name hath not been written in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain, from the foundation of the world."

That the Neronian persecution corresponded in atrocity to the fearful array here described, needs no proof to any who understand the history of those times. Our present purpose does not require us to dwell upon it at length. For a summary view the reader is referred to what we have said respecting the "Man of Sin" (*ante*, p. 117).

The next six chapters of the Apocalypse describe the defeat of these enemies, and the punishment of the persecutors. In chapter 17 is given a vision of Rome itself, under the figure of a scarlet-robed har-

¹See a vivid description of the character and persecutions of this monster in Farrar's *Early Days of Christianity*, Book I.

lot, riding upon a scarlet colored beast covered with blasphemous titles, and drunken with the blood of the martyred saints. A prophetic dirge laments her hastening downfall, while a rejoicing chorus in heaven exults over the retribution, and the approaching marriage of the Lamb. Then appears the conquering Messiah, the Word of God, followed by the armies of heaven, while the Beast and his allies prepare their final assault upon him. These are overcome and captured, the beasts are cast into hell, and all their hosts slain. Then the Dragon himself, the arch instigator of the whole, is seized, and bound in the abyss, and a thousand years of rest for the church, and triumph of the martyrs ensue.

This period of one thousand years is that which has given to theology the term **THE MILLENNIUM**. Without due consideration of the connection of the passage, it has been assumed that it was identical with the coming age of glory and blessedness so fully described by the prophets. The more critical studies of recent scholars are showing that this assumption is unwarranted, and that it confounds things which are unlike in nearly every particular. Take from them the single idea that both involve a curtailment, in some sense, of the power of evil, and there is nothing in common between them. On the other hand, the differences are radical and irreconcilable. The Millennium of the Apocalypse is the binding of Satan as a *persecutor* only, the instigator of the bloody hostility to the church of which the Beast and the False

Prophet had been his instruments;¹ the latter day glory of the prophets is a period of universal holiness. The former was to last one thousand years, the latter to be without end. That was to co-exist with nations in the distant parts of the earth that had never been brought into subjection to Christ,² "whose number is as the sands of the sea;" this was to be absolutely universal, "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," "from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same." The one was to be followed by the loosing of Satan again, and the gathering of vast numbers of yet unsubdued enemies in a final assault upon Christ's kingdom, an idea utterly inconsistent with the everlasting triumph and peace of the other. It is impossible to identify the two periods, from the descriptions given in the Scriptures, without doing violence to every principle of consistent interpretation. Says Prof. C. A. Briggs: "There are insuperable exegetical objections to this association of the state of blessedness and glory at the Second Advent with the

¹ "The subject of discourse here, as the connection shows, is not Satan's deceiving in the general, but his deceiving with the view of stirring them up to an open attack on the kingdom of Christ for the purpose of destroying it. and so as even to threaten its destruction." Heng., Apoc., Vol. II., p. 355.

² "Who these 'nations' are, and whence they are to come, are questions which cause Millennarians great perplexity. Not to mention the difficulty as to the existence during the Millennium of members of the church who are born and die, marry and are given in marriage, there remains the further difficulty as to unbelieving nations." Abp. Lee, in Speaker's Com,

Millennium of Revelation 20. There is no reference in the latter either directly or indirectly to any such Old Testament passages, by which a bridge may be formed to introduce these conceptions into it." Independent, July 26, 1883.

The event here described stands in the closest connection with the preceding narrative, and is the needed completion of its prophecy. The inspired seer had described the defeat and doom of the Beast and the False Prophet, with all their host. But what is to become of him who instigated all that mischief, the greater sinner behind them whose mere tools they were? Is he to escape with impunity? It will be but slight consolation to the churches, bleeding and crushed in his cruel toils, to know that Nero shall be overthrown, if their greater enemy be still at liberty to foment new persecutions and harass them not only without mercy but without end.

And this I take to be the significance of the representation which follows. It is the comforting voice of Him for whom they have suffered, responding to their cry, and saying, "No, he shall not go free! Not only shall he be utterly destroyed in the final consummation, but even now the end of his bloody career draweth nigh. He shall be arrested, shorn of his power, bound in chains, and shut up in the bottomless pit, the St. Helena of the universe, for one thousand years, while the martyred victims of his malice shall arise from their dishonor, and ascend to thrones of special dignity and glory, as favored participants in the triumph of their King."

The binding of Satan, then, denotes *the cessation of Pagan persecution* against the church. And assuming this view, it is not difficult to assign an approximate date to which it is to be referred.

In the year A.D. 324, Constantine the Great, by the defeat of Licinius, the emperor of the East, became sole monarch of the Roman Empire. He had many years before this embraced Christianity,—according to Eusebius, in consequence of the remarkable vision he had seen of the radiant cross in the sky accompanied by the legend, “By this conquer.” As early as A.D. 315, he had persuaded Licinius to join him in a general edict proclaiming toleration to Christianity, an edict, however, which was little regarded by the Eastern king, who subsequently relapsed into heathenism and came into open conflict with Constantine, in which he was defeated and soon after put to death. Constantine, now attaining the sole imperial dignity, issued a new proclamation reaffirming the edict of toleration, and exhorting all his subjects to “imitate without delay the example of their sovereign, and to embrace the divine truth of Christianity.” From that time this edict was “*received as a general and fundamental law of the Roman world.*”¹

This law granted free and absolute permission to all Christians and others to follow that religion which they preferred; enacted that the churches and lands which had been confiscated by Diocletian should be “restored without dispute, without delay, and with-

¹ Gibbon, Decline and Fall, chap. XX.

out expense"; and established numerous regulations to guard the tranquillity of his Christian subjects, and secure enlarged and equal rights of conscience to all. Such a law, enforced by the authority and example of the illustrious conqueror and sovereign, changed the religious aspect of the empire. Paganism, though not absolutely forbidden, fell into disfavor;¹ its power to injure was wrested from it, its imposing worship faded; in many cases its temples were despoiled and its wealth bestowed upon the church; and to crown all, a new city was founded on the beautiful Bosphorus, which thenceforth was the Christian capital of the empire and of the world.

This remarkable event was regarded by the Christians of that time, and by Constantine himself, as the fulfillment of the very prophecy before us. Accordingly, not only was the well-known *labarum*, composed of the first two letters in the name of our Lord, placed upon the standards of the army and impressed upon the imperial coins, but a public monument was set up, bearing a representation of the emperor, with the cross over his head, and under his feet Satan in the form of a serpent falling headlong into the abyss.² "For," says Eusebius, "the sacred oracles in the books of God's prophets have described

¹ "Heathenism seemed to be annihilated at one blow." Uhlhorn, p. 440.

² "At the entrance of the imperial palace there attracted the gaze of all who went out and in an immense picture representing Constantine himself with the *labarum*, the banner of the cross in his hand, and under his feet pierced with arrows a dragon, the dragon of heathenism." Uhlhorn, p. 442.

him as a dragon and a crooked serpent; and for this reason the emperor thus publicly displayed a painted resemblance (*cera igne resoluta*) of the dragon beneath his own and his children's feet, stricken through with a dart and cast headlong into the depths of the sea. In this manner he intended to represent that concealed adversary of the human race, and to indicate that he was consigned to the gulf of perdition by virtue of the trophy of salvation placed above his head."¹

Perhaps no event in the annals of history was ever more memorable than this. "This revolution," says Pres. Edwards, the elder, "was the greatest revolution and change in the face of things that ever came to pass in the world since the flood. Satan, the prince of darkness, that king and god of the heathen world, was cast out. The roaring lion was conquered by the Lamb of God in the strongest dominion that ever he had, even the Roman Empire."² "This rising significance of the cross," says Schaff, "was a faithful symbol of the extraordinary change in the empire. The Græco-Roman heathenism surrendered after a three hundred years' struggle to Christianity, and died of incurable consumption. The ruler of the civilized world laid his crown at the feet of the crucified Jesus of Nazareth. The successor of Nero, Domitian, and Diocletian, who had done their best to exterminate the pestilential sect, appeared a few years after the last and most bloody persecution, in

¹ *De Vita Const. Lib. I., cap. 40.*

² *Work of Redemption. Period III., part 2.*

the imperial purple at the council at Nice, as protector of this very sect, and took his golden throne at the nod of bishops, many of whom still bore the scars of persecution. The despised religion which for three centuries, like its Founder in the days of his humiliation, had not where to lay his head, was raised to sovereign authority in the state; entered into the prerogatives of the pagan priesthood; grew rich and powerful; built countless churches and altars out of the stones of idol temples to the honor of Christ and his martyrs; employed the wisdom of Greece and Rome to vindicate the foolishness of the cross; exerted a molding influence upon civil legislation; ruled the life of the people, and began to control the general course of civilization.”¹

Such seems to have been the event disclosed to the apostle in Patmos under the symbol of the binding of Satan. It was the one single promise, little estimated by us who live in these late days of prosperous ease, but which to the martyrs and confessors, companions of John in “tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,” was pregnant with most joyful import, that pagan persecution should soon be ended. The bloody Dragon who was preying upon them should be cast down from his throne. The very cross itself, the detested symbol of his enmity, should become the trophy of victory over him. It may be objected that this comes far short of our ideas as to what this long looked for thousand years was to be. True, pagan persecution ceased,

¹ Bib. Sac., Vol. XX., p. 788.

and yet the centuries which followed were anything but an era of prosperity to the church. Ignorance, superstition, and barbarism settled like a pall upon the nations, marking these as the Dark Ages of the world. The papacy usurped secular power, and took up in its turn the bloody weapons of persecution which had fallen from heathen hands. The Bible became a sealed book even within the church, and true religion fled for safety to mountain fastnesses and inaccessible valleys. Was *this*, I shall be asked, with contemptuous surprise, the *Millennium*? And my answer must still be in the affirmative,¹ reiterating my former remark that the surprise expressed proceeds from a wholly wrong assumption of

¹ See Bush on the Millennium, in which nearly the same view is advocated that I have here presented.

"We are disposed to think that the period in question is not meant to be literally and chronologically one thousand years. The number is put indefinitely; it points to a time when Christianity had triumphed over paganism. Heathenism had been destroyed in the Roman empire. This leads to the ancient view, viz.: that the period is past, not future. It will be observed that the Beast and the False Prophet are both destroyed. Chapter 20. Now the Beast cannot mean the papacy, as has been often assumed. It refers to the heathen power which was opposed to Christ and his religion. Hence the Millennium began after the abolition of paganism in the Roman empire." Davidson, *Introd.*, Vol. III., p. 630.

"The Millennium begins, not with any definite event or year of time, but in general with the supremacy of the church or kingdom of Christ over the Roman Empire or world power. * * * John Fox is said to be the first who dated it from Constantine. He was followed by Lord Napier, Patrick Forbes, Hugh Broughton, and most interpreters since." Prof. C. A. Briggs, *Independent*, Aug., 1883.

the nature of the period in question, confounding it with that era of universal rest and glory which is to follow sooner or later after the *last* great persecution, when not only shall Satan be bound in chains, but when he, and death, and Hades, with all enemies of the now triumphant kingdom of Christ, shall be cast into the lake of fire.

What, then, was to be that last persecution?

SECTION III.

FROM MOHAMMEDANISM.

The thousand years have expired, and Satan is loose again. In the distant regions of the earth,—the land of Gog and Magog,—are mighty nations, with a population innumerable “as the sand of the sea.” These he stirs up against the saints. They leave their barbarous homes, invade the Christian territory, surround its capital and the beloved city, Jerusalem,—but are destroyed by the lightnings of heaven. What is this but a graphic description of the rise, the conquests, and the ultimate overthrow of the OTTOMAN EMPIRE, the great monarchy in which Mohammedanism, the rival religion to Christianity, enthroned itself and undertook the conquest of the world?

Magog was the second son of Japheth (Gen. 10: 2), and the name seems to have been borne also by the people descended from him. He and his brothers are generally regarded as having settled in the northern regions of Asia beyond the Euxine and Caspian

seas, and become the progenitors of the various tribes bearing the general designation of Scythians. "Jewish tradition, as preserved by Josephus and Jerome, extended the name (Magog) to all the nomad tribes beyond the Caucasus and the Palus Mæotis, and from the Caspian sea to India, thus including the Tartar and Mongolian tribes, as well as those more properly belonging to the Scythians."¹ In the prophecies of Ezekiel are recorded a series of denunciations against this people, in which GOG appears as their prince or ruler, and MAGOG as the designation of their country. Ezek. 38: 30.

This vast region, the inexhaustible hive of the northern barbarians, who from time immemorial had been the terror of the civilized world, was the original source of the TURKS, who began to figure in history in the sixth century. As early as A.D. 545, a Turkish invasion overspread the continent from the Euxine sea to China, but their power lasted only about two centuries. From time to time they appeared again amid the commotions of the East, and in 1206 they composed a part of the empire of the Great Mogul, Zingis Khan, who reduced to his sway nearly all Asia and a large portion of Europe. In the year A.D. 1299 Athman or OTHMAN, one of their chieftains, invaded and plundered the Christian province of Nicomedia, in Asia Minor, and twenty-seven years later obtained possession of its capital, the beautiful city of Prusa, now Broosa. The lives and property of the Christians were ransomed on the

¹ W. L. Alexander, in *Kitto Bib. Cyc.*

payment of thirty thousand crowns in gold, and the city converted into a Mohammedan capital. "From the conquest of Prusa," says Gibbon, "*we may date the true era of the Ottoman Empire.*"¹ This was in the year 1326, one thousand and two years from the promulgation of the imperial edict of Constantine.

It is difficult at this day for any who are not thoroughly familiar with the history of the East to understand what the Ottoman Empire once was in its relations to Christianity. Turkey is now, emphatically, "the sick man," holding his very throne by the sufferance of Christian nations. But three centuries ago it was something very different from this. The following description, taken from the learned history of Richard Knolles, published in 1603, at the time when that empire was in the height of its prosperity, will show how it was regarded at that time.

"There stept up among the Turkes in Bithynia one Osman or OTHOMAN, of the Ozugian tribe or familie, a man of great spirit and valor, who by little and little growing up amongst the rest of his countrymen and other the effeminate Christians on that side of Asia, at last, like another Romulus, tooke upon him the name of a Sultan or King, and is right worthily accounted the first founder of the mightie empire of the Turkes, which, continued by many descents directly in the line of himself even unto Achmet who now reigneth, is from a small beginning become the greatest terrour of the worlde, and holding in subjection many greate and mightie kingdoms

¹Decline and Fall, chap. LXIV.

in Asia, Europe, and Africke, is grown to that height of pride as that it threatneth destruction unto the rest of the kingdoms of the earth, laboring with nothing more than the weight of itselfe. In the greatnesse whereof is swallowed up both the name and empire of the Sarasins, the glorious empire of the Greeks, the renowned kingdoms of Macedonia, Peloponessus, Epirus, Bulgaria, Servia, Bosnia, Armenia, Cyprus, Syria, Egypt, Judea, Tunes, Algeirs, Media, Mesopotamia, with a great part of Hungarie, as also of the Persian Kingdom, and all those churches and places so much spoken of in holy Scripture (the Romans onely excepted), and in brief, so much of Christendom as farre exceedeth that which is thereof at this day left. So that at this present, if you consider the beginning, progress, and perpetual felicitie of this the Othoman Empire, there is in this world nothing more admirable or strange; if the greatnesse and lustre thereof, nothing more magnificent or glorious; if the power and strength thereof, nothing more dreadful and dangerous; which, wondering at nothing but the beauty of itself, and drunk with the pleasant wine of perpetual felicitie, holdeth all the rest of the world in scorne, thundering out nothing but still bloud and warre, with a full perswasion in time to rule over all, refining unto itself no other limits than the uttermost bounds of the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same.”¹

¹ Generall Historie of the Turks. *Preface.*

The same writer, at the close of his history of Othman, speaks of him as the founder of the empire, thus :

“ Of a poore lordship he left a great kingdom, having subdued a great part of the lesser Asia, and is worthily accounted the first founder of the Turks’ great kingdom and empire. Of him the Turkish kings and emperors ever since have been called the *Othman* kings and emperours, as lineally of him descended, and the Turks themselves *Osmanidæ*, as the people or subjects of Othman or Osman, for so he is of the Turks commonly called.”

The identification of this formidable power with the Gog or Magog of the Apocalypse is affirmed with great confidence by the learned Grotius in his Commentary. I quote at length :

“Rev. 20 : 1.—Aliud est visum, significans tranquillitatem quæ ecclesiis per Constantinum erat primum data, aucta per successores, fore quidam longam, non tamen usque ad mundi interitum.

“3. Mille illorum annorum initium duci debet ab edicto Constantini, quod est apud Eusebium, in quo vincti draconis est mentio.

“4. Constantini edictum pro Christianismi libertate datum fuit circa annum Christi 311. Mille post annis orta est domus Ottomanica quæ non in Persidem aut oras Romani imperii, sed in partes ejus intimas atque potissimas in Asiam Græciamque invexit Mahumetis religionem Satanæ repertum.

•

"8. Hic ergo per Gogum intelligenda domus Otomanica, quæ primum in ea parte Asiæ se ostendit."¹

That the Turkish empire has ever been hostile to Christianity is one of the most familiar facts of history. In 1460, under Mahomet II. Constantinople was captured with terrible slaughter, its people murdered or sold into captivity, its churches burned or converted into mosks, and the city of the first Christian emperor made the capital of Islam. In 1517 the Holy Land was overrun, and Jerusalem itself, "the beloved city,"² taken. For more than three centuries it has maintained its sway over the lands where the Saviour and his apostles taught and died, and has exercised a pitiless despotism over all their followers. The market places of her cities have been public marts, where Christians of both sexes and of all ages have been sold into perpetual

¹ Rev. 20: 1. Another vision was seen, signifying that the tranquillity which was first bestowed by Constantine and augmented by his successors would last a long time, but not until the destruction of the world.

3. The beginning of the thousand years should be reckoned from the edict of Constantine related by Eusebius, in which mention is made of the bound dragon.

4. The edict of Constantine for the freedom of Christianity was issued about A.D. 311. A thousand years after this the Ottoman dynasty arose, which carried the religion of Mohammed, shown to be the religion of Satan, not only into Persia and the extremities of the Roman Empire, but also into its most central and powerful parts, Asia and Greece.

8. Here, therefore, by Gog is to be understood the Ottoman family, which first showed itself in that part of Asia.

² "Jerusalem, so styled in Ecclus. 24: 11. Comp. Ps. 78: 78. Abp. Lee in Sp. Com.

slavery. Confiscation, oppressive taxation, and open robbery, have despoiled them of their goods, and the murder of an unbelieving dog has been esteemed as a service to Allah and his Prophet. It is only within the present generation, under the growing influence of the western kingdoms, that its hostility has at all abated, and a toleration of the Christian faith has been reluctantly conceded.

Upon the destruction of this third great persecuting power, it is predicted that "the devil that deceived these nations shall be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet are"—his former allies in enmity to Christ,— "and shall be tormented day and night forever." That is, bearing in mind still the part that he has been acting hitherto, persecution by hostile nations against Christianity shall forever cease. That we are drawing near to that period seems very probable. The persecuting empire of Othman is already in its dotage, and any serious attempts to renew its ancient assaults on Christianity would infallibly lead to its prompt extinction as by "a fire from God out of heaven." The Christian nations have become the mightiest in the world. No anti-christian power, Pagan, Buddhistic, or Mohammedan, could withstand their united forces for a day. On the other hand, Christianity has become itself the aggressor, and with weapons not carnal, the Bible and the appliances of Christian civilization, is going forth on its career of conquest which, according to all present appearances, must in a few centuries, not to say a few years, embrace the whole family of man.

SECTION IV.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE MARTYRS.

During the thousand years of the binding of Satan, there should take place what is described by the Seer as follows :

“ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them ; and *I saw* the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshiped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection ; over these the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

The first statement in this passage is of the most general character. It is as if the apostle had at first but a glimpse of a scene which he did not understand. He saw thrones, persons sitting upon them, and judicial or royal (for ruling and judging are synonymous),¹ dignity given to them. Then, as if a clearer view was afforded him, or an explanation added, he expands that outline statement into the fuller one succeeding. This being the case, we may understand the connective “and” in the sense of

¹ “Both ideas are combined.” Lee, Sp. Com.

“even,” “to wit.” The same well-known usage of the Greek conjunction appears again near the close of the verse.

The persons here referred to are the *martyrs* of the preceding period of persecution, viz., those that had been “beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God.” The remaining language probably includes also the others who had been equally faithful in refusing obedience to the Beast at the peril of their lives, though they were not actually put to death. These—the martyrs and confessors—and no others¹ are the subject of the passage. The assumption which is often made that all the pious dead are included, is entirely without warrant from the passage itself, and tends to involve the whole in inextricable confusion.²

These “lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Various opinions have been advanced as to the nature of this resurrection. 1. Some understand it of the resurrection of the body; the martyrs, as the reward of their constancy, being raised to glory a thousand years before the general resurrection. Millennialists generally add to this the idea that this first resurrection extends to all the righteous dead,

¹ “It is of the martyrs only.” Lee, Sp. Com.

² The original word *pepelekismenon* is derived from *pelekus*, the ax or short sword which was used by the Romans in beheading. In itself, therefore, it shows who were meant. If an historian of the American colonies had described a burned village strewn with the bones of those who had been *tomahawked*, every reader would understand him as referring to an *Indian* massacre.

and that the place of their reigning is to be here on earth. But I see no ground for either of these beliefs, either in the language before us or in the eschatological teachings of the Scriptures in general. 2. Whitby and other postmillennarians regard this not as a resurrection of the *persons* of the martyrs, but of their *principles* and spirit. "It may," says Archbishop Whately, "signify not the literal raising of dead men, but the raising up of an increased Christian zeal and holiness; the revival in the Christian church, or in some considerable portion of it, of the *spirit* and *energy* of the noble martyrs of old (even as John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elias); so that Christian principles shall be displayed in action throughout the world in an infinitely greater degree than ever before."¹ This theory seems to me more inadmissible than the former. The bare reading of the passage suggests its inadequacy, and almost compels the inference that it was resorted to, not because it was the natural and obvious import of the text, but because it was the most plausible way out of the difficulties caused by the many erroneous assumptions made as to the general scope and design of the book. Most undeniably, the reward vouchsafed to those martyrs and confessors was something personal to them, which made them "blessed and holy" in an eminent degree.

That reward lies upon the face of the passage, and so plainly that I marvel it could ever be mistaken. *Judicial dignity was given to them; they reigned with Christ.*

¹ Essays on the Future State.

They *lived, that is, they reigned*. I take the two words here as synonymous, the *and* being the *kai epexigetical* or explanatory, so well known to commentators.¹ It is a use of the word often occurring in the Scriptures. Robinson instances Matt. 21: 5—“an ass, *that is, a colt*.” 1 Cor. 15: 24; James 1: 27; 3: 9, “God, *that is, the Father*.” Matt. 13: 41. “Things that offend, *that is, them which do iniquity*.” Rom. 1: 5. “Grace, *that is, the apostleship*,” etc.

The word *live* often has the signification to be blessed, i. e. to live emphatically, to have life in an intensified degree.² Rom. 10: 5; Gal. 3: 12. “He that doeth these things shall *live* in them.” 1 Thess. 3: 8. “Now we *live* if ye stand fast.” Luke 10: 28. “This do, and thou shalt *live*.” Heb. 12: 9. “Shall we not be in subjection to the Father of spirits and *live*?” The idea, then is, that these faithful witnesses for Christ, whom their enemies supposed they had utterly destroyed, still *lived*, i. e. they were exalted to a high state of felicity. Then, as if to be more explicit it is added, “They reigned with Christ.” In other words, their living consisted in the honor of participating in the administration of the kingdom with Christ the king.

This is something more than “entering the kingdom,” “seeing the kingdom,” “inheriting the kingdom,” etc., which is promised to all believers. Every loyal subject of a monarch may share in the happi-

¹ Winer's N. T. Grammar, p. 458.

² “This is the meaning of the expression here.” Abp. Lee, Sp. Com.

ness flowing from his reign, its peace, prosperity, security, and glory. But not all are elevated to princely rank in it, and made participants in the government itself. This special honor is reserved in Christ's kingdom for the martyrs and confessors who had been faithful unto death. In our loose way of quoting the Scriptures, we have become habituated to cite these extraordinary promises as if pertaining to all Christ's people. I doubt, however, if an instance can be found in which this dignity of kingship in heaven is not predicated solely of those who, like their Master, reach it by the way of suffering and death for his sake. "*Inter feras, per crucem, ad coronam.*"

This peculiar reward¹ of the martyrs is often mentioned elsewhere. When the two sons of Zebedee petitioned for princely thrones on either hand of Christ in his kingdom, his reply was, "Ye know not what ye ask? Are ye able to drink of my cup and share in my baptism?" (Matt. 20: 22.) You are aspiring to the reserved honors of those who suffer as I am to suffer; who for my sake go to the cross and the bloody tomb. To ask for the former is to ask for the latter also. Said Peter at another time, "We have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" Jesus' reply was: "Ye which have *followed* me,"—and the connection shows that

¹ "This *fellowship of suffering* Paul regards as that which must be presupposed, in order to the attainment of glory—of participation in the glory of Christ. This connection became a rich spring of the enthusiasm for martyrdom." Meyer on Rom. 8: 17.

he meant it in the same sense of self-denial and suffering,—“in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Matt. 19: 27–29. In Rom. 8: 16, 17, the two grades of heavenly blessedness for the two classes of the saints are distinctly specified. “The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we (all Christians) are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God—and *joint heirs* with Christ if so be that we *suffer* with him, that we may be also *glorified* with him.” So Peter, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you—but inasmuch as ye are *partakers of Christ’s sufferings*, rejoice, that at the revelation of his glory ye may rejoice also with exceeding joy.” 1 Pet. 4: 12, 13. Accordingly, it passed into a saying (*λόγος*) among the early Christians, which Paul emphatically declared to be a true one, “If we died with him we shall also live with him; if we *endure* we shall also *reign* with him.” 2 Tim. 2: 12. In Rev. 1: 5, 6, John ascribes praise to Jesus Christ “who is the faithful witness (Gr. *Martyr*), the First born of the dead—that loved us—and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto God and his Father.” He is addressing his “companions in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.” And to those among the churches who were faithful in that time of persecution, Christ sent the special promises, “He that overcometh and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the

nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers, as I also have received of my Father,"—i. e. he shall share in my royal authority, as predicted in the second Psalm. "He that overcometh I will give to him to sit with me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne." Rev. 2: 26, 27; 3: 21.

This reigning with Christ shall continue "a thousand years," evidently the same thousand as that of Satan's confinement.¹ Not that it shall then terminate, but that period is mentioned in order that the two may stand in contrast with each other. As during the martyr age Satan was reigning in the Beast and False Prophet, and the saints were humiliated and oppressed, so now for a thousand years he shall be humiliated and they shall reign. This reigning was the "judgment that was given to them," and the fulfillment of the words of Paul in 1 Cor. 6: 3, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" It is undoubtedly a figure taken from the triumphal honors decreed to illustrious conquerors and their generals, in which their vanquished foes were shown in dungeons or dragged in chains behind their victors.

"This is the first resurrection." Not of the body,

¹ "The identity of this period of a thousand years with that of vs. 2, 3, which was unaccountably denied by Bengel, if it might otherwise be a matter of doubt and were not determinately fixed by the whole context, at all events is established by verse 7, where the thousand years cannot be conceived different from those in verse 3, and as little from those in the immediately preceding verses in vs. 4-6." Hengstenberg, Vol. II., p. 337, note.

for there is not a word said of this, and historically, we know that nothing of the sort took place at any time within the period referred to. The persons whom John saw were the *souls* of the martyrs, and it was these that lived and reigned. The word *anastasis* does not, of itself, imply a corporeal resurrection; its literal meaning, as will be shown hereafter, is the *second* or *future* life. The place where they lived and reigned was "with Christ"—*i. e.*, in heaven, not on earth.¹ The meaning is, This is the peculiarly glorious and blessed *after-life*, succeeding the murderous blow of the Roman executioner, which shall be enjoyed by those who remain faithful till death.

It is called the *first* resurrection, not in point of time, but of *rank and honor*.² This use of the Greek word is very common. It is translated *chief* in Matt. 20: 27; Mark 6: 21; 10: 44; Luke 19: 47; Acts 13: 50; 16: 12; 25: 2; 28: 7, 17; 1 Tim. 1: 15, etc. In Luke 15: 22, it is the *best*.

¹ "This resurrection is to be explained in accordance with Matt. 27: 52, 53; Eph. 4: 8; 1 Pet. 3: 19; 4: 6; Heb. 11: 13; John 5: 25; as a resurrection *from Hades to Heaven*. Those who have suffered in this world and have been slain ascend to their thrones in heaven. This is true of each individual in turn. It is true of the whole class." Prof. C. A. Briggs, Independent, Aug. 1883.

² "The resurrection is ascribed to these persons only in a figurative sense, that, namely, of a transition into a new and glorious existence; as is indicated by the expression, 'This is the first resurrection,' employed for the purpose of distinguishing it from the second resurrection, which is that more commonly meant by the term.—To understand the first merely by *priority of time* is forbidden." Hengstenberg, in loc.

Hence in the original this resurrection is denoted by a phraseology differing from that which is applied to the resurrection of mankind in general. It is lost sight of in our English version, but it is a peculiarity of too much importance to be rightfully disregarded. The latter is usually styled simply the resurrection of the dead; that of Christ and his martyrs, the resurrection *from* or *from out of* the dead. So in the Vulgate, the *resurrectio a* or *ex mortuis* is distinguished from the *resurrectio mortuorum*. See Rom. 8: 11; 10: 7; Eph. 1: 20; Heb. 13: 20; 1 Pet. 1: 3: 21. It implies that out of the whole number of the departed there shall be those who attain a peculiar honor, one which they do not share in common with the rest.

Being thus the most exalted state of future reward, it became the object of intensest desire on the part of persecuted saints. It was this, Paul says, which animated the martyrs of the former dispensation. They were "tortured, not accepting their deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." Heb. 11: 35. Even for himself he declared that he made it the object of his most strenuous effort, "to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the *fellowship of his sufferings*, becoming conformable unto his death, if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection from the dead." (Gr. "the resurrection which is from among the dead"). "Not," he adds, "that I have already attained, or am already made perfect,"—he had not yet won the martyr's crown by his death,—"but I press on if so be

that I may apprehend—pressing toward the goal unto the *prize* of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3: 10-14.

It was the same inspiring hope that actuated the Christians of the succeeding centuries, and led them to seek the bloody crown of martyrdom, the pledge of the crown of victory above. "I beseech you," wrote Ignatius to his friends, "that you show not an unseasonable good will towards me. Suffer me to be food for the wild beasts, by whom I shall attain unto God. For I am the wheat of God, and I shall be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ."¹ Such as attained this coveted honor were distinguished in painting by the aureole surrounding their heads, in token of the celestial crown which they had won. "It was conceived," says Mosheim,² "that they were taken directly up into heaven and admitted to a share in the divine counsels and administration; that they sat as judges with God, enjoying the highest marks of his favor, and possessing influence sufficient to obtain from him whatever they might make the object of their prayers." To the same effect testifies the sneering Gibbon.³ "It is not easy to extract any distinct ideas from the vague though eloquent declarations of the Fathers, or to ascertain the degree of immortal glory and happiness which they so confidently promised to those who were so fortunate as to shed their blood in the cause of religion. They

¹ Epist. ad Romanos.

² Com. Vol. I., p. 136.

³ Chap. XVI.

inculcated with becoming diligence that the fire of martyrdom supplied every defect and expiated every sin; that while the souls of ordinary Christians were obliged to pass through a slow and painful purification, the triumphant sufferers entered into the immediate fruition of eternal bliss, where in the society of the patriarchs, the apostles, and the prophets, they reigned with Christ and acted as his assessors in the universal judgment of mankind."¹ It is true that not a few ideas savoring of superstition and extravagance came to be attached to the boon of martyrdom, yet they grew out of the teachings of the Scriptures already referred to, and show the interpretation which in that age was given to passages regarded in modern times as obscure.

SECTION V.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE DEAD.

The last five verses of this chapter are almost universally assumed to be a description of the General Judgment, in which the whole family of man will be judged at the end of time. A careful study of the passage, however, in its connection, will disclose reasons for doubt as to whether that is its true import. Some very able scholars have taken a different view of it.²

¹ "Certatim gloriosa in certamina ruebantur, multique avidius tum martyria gloriosis mortibus querebantur quam nunc episcopatus pravis ambitionibus appetuntur." Sulp. Severus 1: 11.

² Grotius regards it as describing the punishment of some antecedent to the General Judgment, as the glory of the mar-

1. In the first place, such an understanding of it impairs the *unity* of the narration. It can scarcely be denied that these verses are closely connected with the preceding, and therefore with all that portion of the book beginning with chapter 12. If so, then we are to presume that they relate to the same specific subject, viz. : the overthrow and punishment of the persecutors of the church. The writer was not here speaking of the condition or destiny of the human family as such. His gaze and that of his readers was upon a particular class of men, who were in relations of momentous interest to them, and to the kingdom of their Lord. The question then absorbing every thought was, what should become of them? The martyrs,—he has told us of them, enthroned and crowned for their fidelity. But what of those who *made* them martyrs, or who at least were willing subjects of the Oppressor? That he leaves these, just at that point, and skips across all the ages to describe an event, which, however important in itself, had no immediate connection with the subject, which was far distant in time, and which could have no special comfort or instruction for the persecuted church, is a supposition so violent and unnatural that we should not resort to it unless absolutely compelled to do so.

2. Let it be observed that the event here described is a judgment of *the dead only*; the General tyrs precedes also that judgment—"quorundam ergo poena judicium illud ultimum antecedit, sicut martyrum gloria antecedit idem judicium."—He applies the happy New Jerusalem state which follows to the flourishing period of the church between Constantine and Justinian.

Judgment is to embrace both "*the quick and the dead.*" Acts 10: 42; 2 Tim. 4: 1; 1 Peter 4: 5. The latter is to be preceded by the instantaneous change of the living into the immortal state (1 Cor. 15: 51; 1 Thes. 4: 17; Phil. 3: 21), and by the resurrection of the dead. John 5: 28, 29. But nothing of this kind is mentioned in connection with the judgment before us. It is not the living nor the risen that are judged, but those who are *dead*. Four times is that term applied to them, as if to emphasize the fact, and distinguish this from that yet more comprehensive transaction when the entire race of man receive their trial and award.

3. The assumption in question does violence to the doctrine of the General Judgment itself. I hope to show in subsequent pages that that great department of our Lord's kingly administration has a far wider range than is implied in the passage before us. We are not to suppose that He who at his ascension became the Supreme Judge as well as Ruler of men, who had punished Ananias and Sapphira and Herod, and the apostate and persecuting Jerusalem, did not until now, after the overthrow of the last persecutors, administer judgment to mankind, much less that he defers it to the end of time. True this was *a* judgment, and a very grand and glorious one, but it was only a single act—a special session—so to speak, of the judgment, which embraces within its infinite range all men and all time.

4. The reason of this almost universal assumption is unquestionably to be found in the language and

costume in which it is clothed, and not in its logical relations to the prophecy where it stands. It is, as just remarked, the description of a judgment scene, and in its terms it is worthy to set forth that for which it is so commonly taken. But this of itself alone is not decisive. A great many instances might be cited where, judging from the phraseology only, we should be led to applications of scripture passages, which other more weighty reasons forbid. Says the Speaker's Commentary of the ancient traditional view of Daniel's four kingdoms: "This interpretation is perfectly satisfactory when tested by the *mere imagery* of the two chapters. None are so ready to grant this as those who yet oppose the interpretation. But there exists a certain connection between the facts of these chapters and those narrated in subsequent portions of the book which, to many moderns, renders the interpretation improbable, if not impossible."¹ The same thing, I submit, is true in this instance. If the Book of Revelation is to be interpreted on the recognized principles of exegesis, the impressions given by the mere sounds of the words must be held subordinate to the requirements of logical scope and construction.

5. We have a guide to the passage before us, of the utmost value, in the similar judgment scene of Daniel 7: 9-11. The very great similarity between that entire chapter and this part of the Apocalypse is recognized by all commentators. There, too, was a hideous persecuting wild Beast, the prototype,

¹ Excursus on Dan. 2 and 7.

with variations, of the Beasts of Revelation, who made war with the saints and prevailed against them, until he was arrested by the avenging interposition of heaven. There, too, was a judgment not less majestic or sublime than the one before us. Let the two be placed side by side, that the striking resemblances between them may be the more apparent.

DANIEL 7: 9-11.

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld *even* till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

REVELATION 20: 11-15.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which *is the book of life*; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, *even* the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

In each of these cases we have the throne and One, sitting upon it in resplendent majesty, the vast multitudes standing before it, the opened books of remembrance, the judgment, and the casting of the condemned into retributive fire. Now we *know*, because the interpreting angel positively assures us of it, that the first refers to the destruction of Daniel's Fourth Beast, in other words, to Antiochus Epiph-

anes, the great Syrian persecutor of the Jews, the prototype of Nero and the persecuting emperors of the Christians at Rome. Why should not the second have a like application to the latter? What else could they of the seven churches, mostly Jewish in birth and education, and familiar from their childhood with the prophetic imagery of their Scriptures, understand by it?

This impressive scene, then, I am compelled to regard, not as is usually understood, as a description of the final judgment of all mankind, but as an integral part of the prophecy relating to the overthrow and punishment of the persecutors of the church. The key to it is found in the fifth verse of the chapter. "*The rest of the dead* lived not until the thousand years were finished." We had been told the doom of the Beast and his allies, and the humiliation and binding of the Dragon whose servants they were. Next, we were shown the glorious reward of the martyrs and those who had proved faithful in this hour of great trial,—the blessed resurrection, the thrones, and the crowns to which they had attained. But what of "*the rest of the dead*" viz. those who *did* worship the beast, and *did* join the deceived nations in their attack upon Christianity? They are so called, *par eminence*, to distinguish them from the martyrs who "*lived*," *par eminence*. The universality of the judgment corresponds to the universal dominion of Rome at that time; the phrase "*the whole world*" (τὴν οἰκουμένην δλην) of which Satan was the deceiver (ch. 12: 9), being the well-

known designation of the Roman Empire. Luke 2: 1; Acts 11: 28; 17: 6; 24: 5. These, with Death and Hades—personifications before shown as connected with persecution (ch. 6: 8)—and all whose names were not found in the register of the faithful, are cast into the lake of fire. This was the *second death*, contrasted again with the life of the martyrs, which was the *first resurrection*.

The import of this passage, then, as a whole, is very simple. God will destroy the persecutors of his people, and reward the latter according to their fidelity or the opposite. It is a prophecy having special reference to the age in which John wrote; and while the general principles involved in it apply to all ages, its immediate and direct fulfillment was among the things which it was announced at the opening of the book must "*shortly* come to pass."

CHAPTER V.

THE AGE OF CONQUEST.

THUS far we have come in the history of the Kingdom under the two-fold guidance of Prophecy and Providence. The Parousia continues; Christ is present in his kingdom among men, and is steadily carrying forward the government which is in his hand toward the consummation.

That consummation is described generally in the glowing visions of the ancient prophets, and in numerous passages from our Lord's own sayings and the writings of the apostles. I shall presently speak of these more particularly. Suffice it to say here, that, while expressed in general, often symbolic, terms, it will be one equaling all that the most ardent hopes of man have ventured to anticipate. Indeed, it is expressly declared that neither the senses nor imagination of man are adequate to conceive of the glorious reality.¹ Though the "thousand years" of Rev. 20 refer to another event, it is by no means to be understood that the world is not to have its *Millennium*, in the sense usually denoted, of universal peace, rest and felicity.

The question now is as to the methods by which that period is to be introduced; and in respect to this there are two theories.

¹ 1 Cor. 2: 9.

The first is that it is to take place *suddenly*; ushered upon the world by a grand visible appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven, to destroy by his judgments all the wicked, and with glorious power and majesty set up his kingdom upon the earth. This is the view advocated by Adventists and Millennarians generally. For myself, I know of nothing to warrant it, or even to give it plausibility. As to any such "coming" of Christ, the Scriptures are silent. His real Parousia began eighteen hundred years ago, and we know nothing of any other. Or, if it did not, I can see no ground for expecting it now. In the elaborate calculations of prophetic arithmetic, which are so often advanced to prove its present near approach, I have no confidence. The "times" and "days" of Daniel and the Apocalypse have nothing to do with the subject, relating to things wholly and long ago past. The principle on which these periods, whatever they are, are converted into "years," has no sufficient authorization.¹ The date or dates from which it is customary to reckon them, are both uncertain in themselves and irrelevant to the matter in hand. The events in which it is expected they will issue, such as the arrest of the course of human affairs, the sudden end of this mundane sphere, the penal destruction of the unconverted, the conflagration of this globe, and the establishment of an earthly kingdom at Jerusalem or elsewhere in which he will reign bodily and visi-

¹ See Prof. Cowles' Dissertation appended to his Commentary on Ezekiel and Daniel, p. 459.


bly for a thousand years—all this seems to me without warrant from Scripture, to be derived from it only by violating the most obvious and fundamental principles of interpretation, and in direct contravention of what is positively taught us as to the true history and destiny of this world.

The other, and what I deem the true, view is that the consummation is to be reached by *development*, under the operation of established laws, and may, therefore, require many years, perhaps centuries, for its attainment.

1. For, first, our Lord has expressly asserted this to be the mode of progress in his kingdom. We have before cited some of his words on this subject. "It is as if a man should cast seed upon the earth, and should sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring up and *grow*,—first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." "It is like a grain of mustard seed, which when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth, yet when it is sown, groweth up and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches, so that the birds of the heaven may lodge under the shadow thereof." Mark 4: 26–32. "It is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." Matt. 13: 33. In other words, development from within, growth from its own divinely implanted law of life, is the mode of that kingdom's advancement. We do not mean that there is not a constant providential superintendence over it, guard-

ing and guiding it, and above all a constant ministry of the Holy Spirit, quickening its life, and supplying ever new vital forces, but that all this is under the normal law of the kingdom. Now, it seems to me in the highest degree unreasonable to assume that Christ is going to violate or ignore this principle, which he has himself so clearly enunciated, and by a sudden interference, with miracle and violence, arrest this established course of things and introduce another. He will not devastate the growing field, and instantaneously *create* a crop. He will not throw away the "stone cut out without hands," and let down from heaven the mighty mountain which is to fill the whole earth. To do so would be to confess his own law of growth a failure, or to manifest a capriciousness of plan and purpose inconsistent with the character of Him "with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning."

2. What was thus asserted in principle as the law of growth in Christ's kingdom, has been confirmed *in fact*. It is now two thousand years, nearly, since that kingdom was first established, and during all this period the vital forces implanted in it have been working; and it is these, under the fostering care of God's providence and Spirit, which have resulted in what we see to-day of the majestic prevalence and power of Christianity. Never has there been any sudden intervention of extraordinary force in its behalf, to remove obstacles, to save from disasters, to destroy enemies, or to impart miraculous powers. All pretenses of that sort recorded in mediæval



legends or the lives of the saints are myths, unworthy of a moment's serious attention. Read the Acts of the Apostles, the genuine writings of the Christian Fathers, the records of authentic history, and you discern in them the operation of the same spiritual forces, and only the same, which we see at work in our own day. From the scenes of the day of Pentecost which ushered in the new kingdom, to the Reformation under Luther and Calvin and Knox, and the revivals attending the preaching of Edwards and Whitefield and Wesley, and our own Moody and Sankey, the story of salvation has ever been one and the same. Men have been sanctified through the truth. Through the foolishness of the preaching God has saved them that believe. The Lord has daily added the saved to the church. And what has been we have every reason to believe will be, save that there may be increase in the rate of progress. Nations, by and by, will be born in a day, nevertheless, they will be *born* as they always were—as individual souls are—by the Spirit of God, through belief of the truth. There never has been any other mode of spiritual conquest for the kingdom of our Lord, and there is no warrant for believing there ever will be.

3. This fundamental law of the spiritual kingdom of Christ receives strong confirmation from the demonstrations of science in respect to the *physical history* of the globe. The crust of the earth has been subjected to innumerable changes in the long lapse of ages. Systems of rock-formations have followed

systems, each with its distinctive fossils, vegetable and animal; every point of the earth's surface has been again and again alternately submerged under the ocean, and elevated above it; climates the most diverse have prevailed, including even torrid arctics and frigid tropics; races of plants and animals, ranging from the humblest seaweed to the California pine, from the microscopic ocean shell, through successive tribes of mollusks, fishes, saurians, and mammals, have come into being, have lived and died, and become extinct. Man, the present lord of creation, is but "of yesterday," the youngest, as he is the highest, of these works of God. Yet this immeasurable series of changes, affecting both the earth and its inhabitants, has been wrought, as is now well established, by natural causes, ordained by the Creator, indeed, but working each slowly and progressively according to its own law. Theories of catastrophes and "cataclysms" changing suddenly the condition of the globe, or of its flora and fauna, except to a very limited extent, are now almost wholly discarded. Says Sir Charles Lyell, than whom there is no higher authority on these matters, "I see no reason for supposing that any part of the revolutions in physical geography—indicate any catastrophe greater than those which the present generation has witnessed."¹ And Principal Dawson, "In all the lapse of geological time there has been an absolute uniformity of natural law. The same grand machinery of force and matter has been in use throughout all the ages,

¹ *Antiquity of Man*, p. 287

working out the great plan. Yet the plan has been progressive and advancing, nevertheless. The uniformity has been in the methods; the results have presented a wondrous diversity and development.”¹ Now, I concede that this is not proof that a similar law of progress prevails in God’s spiritual kingdom, but it certainly creates a strong presumption in its favor. It is the same God that worketh all in all. He is not restricted in time, as man is; he can take enough for all he desires. He has eternity for his working day, and needs no *coup de main*, no sudden surprises, for the accomplishment of his vast designs. Invisible in his own being to the eyes of his creatures, he is invisible also in the methods by which he acts; making it his glory “to conceal a matter,” till the grand results thereof are matured, and may be exhibited in their perfection and beneficence to his admiring universe.

In hinting at the course of this progressive development,—for I can do no more—we have but little help from Revelation. Prophecy, while so full and impassioned in describing the consummation itself, gives but the merest glimpse of the several steps or stages that are to lead to it. I venture to suggest only the following:

1. Christianity is to become *universal* throughout the earth. This implies, first, that its territory and population are to become known to Christian nations. In this view, the career of discovery, which may be dated from the time of Columbus, has been closely

¹Story of the Earth and Man, p. 3.


allied with the advancement of the gospel. In these four hundred years a new continent has been found, explored, colonized, and to a large extent, christianized. The discovery of the Cape of Good Hope and of the passage to India has opened all Southern and Eastern Asia to the knowledge, the commerce, and the religion of Europe. Captain Cook sailed round the world, and made known the innumerable islands of the Pacific, where, since then, nations of cannibals have been raised from the deepest degradation, and made living witnesses of the transforming power of the gospel. Even Africa, so long hermetically sealed and bound in the fetters of fetichism and slavery, is now revealing its mysteries, and showing us new missionary fields, inviting immediate occupation, of the most promising character. And, in general, I think it may be safely said, in view of the vastly improved methods of navigation and travel, the spirit of scientific inquiry, the enlarged demands of commerce, and the increase of missionary zeal throughout all branches of the Christian church, that within less than fifty years, the entire territory of our habitable globe will have been explored and opened to the access of the gospel.

2. Christianity is to become the *sole religion* of mankind. It is even now the only one which is making any progress in the world. All the old systems of the East, though still holding in their embrace a majority of the race, are fast sinking into decrepitude, and wherever they come into contact with Christianity, are falling before it. Mohammed-

danism sleeps in its fatalistic sensualism, with no power to resist the encroachment of Western nations. Brahminism finds its Vedas convicted of false science and philosophy, in the presence of the Christian Scriptures. Buddhism, Confucianism and Sintism can no longer shut themselves away from the light behind the barriers of national exclusiveness. The grosser forms of idolatry, prevailing among savage tribes, all yield at the approach of the gospel borne to them from the lands of civilization. Look the world over, and we can find no system of false religion propagating itself as in past ages, none aggressive as against other systems, none even holding its own against the progress of Christianity. Here, too, we risk little in the prophecy that a single hundred years from the present time may see the latter the only religion of the world recognized as true.

3. Christianity is to be greatly *intensified in power*. It is to bring those who are subject to it to a higher plane of experience, a more intelligent devotion to Christ's service, a more symmetrical and perfect type of character. It is to make conquests among the unconverted, gathering them in rich continuous harvests into the kingdom of the Lord. Children of pious parents are to grow up into Christ from their birth. Revivals are to be multiplied with a power and pervasiveness such as the world has not before seen. Sectarian dissensions in the church are to diminish in bitterness, and Christian love and unity show their blessed fruits, removing what has for ages been one of the chief hindrances to the ad-

vancement of the truth, and increasing the power of the church a hundred fold for conquests over infidelity, and all intrenched and organized forms of evil. To a student of religious history, the progress which has been made during the last hundred years in all these respects appears no way inferior to that which has been witnessed in all the other departments of the world's career. It has been a century of revivals, such as no former age has known. In our own country, vast as has been the growth of population, the increase of evangelical churches, both in numbers and membership, has been in a still larger ratio. It has been the era of missions, which, from the humblest beginnings, have now belted the globe with their stations and their churches of native converts. It has introduced a new age of benevolence, teaching that no man liveth to himself, that Christianity is, in its essence, the following of Christ, the Master, in his work of saving men. It has, we doubt not, elevated the standard of individual Christian character, and promoted through society as a whole a more intelligent faith and a purer morality. Vast as are the evils that remain, numerous and gross as are the crimes which shock us, they are still less prevalent, as compared with the population, than in any former age that can be named since the time when an inspired pen drew that awful portraiture in the first chapter of Romans of the state of society in the capital and mistress of the world. In a word, the gospel is beginning to *mature its fruit*; and it only needs such pentecostal outpourings of the Spirit



as we have already seen some small earnest of, and as, we believe, are soon to be multiplied beyond all precedent, to give it an intensity as well as spread of power, that shall, ere many centuries pass, bring the whole population of the globe within its saving efficacy.

4. Christianity become thus universal and potent in its sway over men as individuals, is to pervade *all the forces* that mold human character, and affect the condition of the world. Among these forces are government, law, education, science, art, philosophy, commerce, fashion, domestic economy, employments, etc. We have only to conceive of all these as made thoroughly Christian, as they will when men themselves become such, to see that under them this will become literally a "new world." What mighty wastes of all that constitutes the world's life, through war and oppression and lust and robbery and crime of all sorts, will be stayed! What inconceivable increase of all that will tend to make it purer and better will accrue! Already we see enough of this process to catch some idea of what the full results will be. When we think of what government was in the days of the Cæsars and the Herods, and what the social state when the larger half of mankind were slaves, when marriage was dissoluble at pleasure, when new-born infants were thrown out to die, when hundreds of men were murdered by public shows, by gladiatorial combats or wild beasts; what science was when chemistry, astronomy, geology, ethnology, and the thousand appliances of en-

ginery and the mechanic arts, were unknown, and contrast with these the state of things in which we live, and the glimpses every day brings us of the new and wonderful things just coming into birth, we cannot fail to be profoundly impressed with the leavening which is going forward in the world's forces. I know that some think the change is not *towards*, but away from, Christianity; that while there is acknowledged progress in all the elements of thought and life, personal, social and national, it is not in the line of religion, or of anything supernatural, but of what is called Nature and Law. Such denials, however, need alarm no one. The fact of the progress is confessed, and if unbelief is too blind to discern aught higher than Nature lying back of Nature, and shaping all its achievements to His own wise purposes, it will make no difference with the result. We know that the great majority of the students of science are believers in Christianity, and that they labor in their chosen fields of research under the double impulse of zeal for the truth and loyalty to that spiritual kingdom whose highest triumph will be the subjection of the world's forces to Christ.

5. Christianity acting through the regenerated inhabitants and the sanctified forces of this world is to effect the promised *physical renovation of the earth itself*. Such a change is often hinted at in prophecy. Every valley shall be exalted, every mountain and hill made low, the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. The wilderness shall blossom as the rose. Fountains shall spring up in

the desert; bitter and pestilential waters shall become sweet. Wild beasts shall lose their ferocity, and become companions and playmates of man. Nay, the very heavens above are to be made new, and there shall be no more sea. In many cases, doubtless, these are figurative expressions, intended - to describe moral and spiritual changes, but besides these they are often to have a fulfillment in a material sense. And the chief agency by which it will be wrought will be man himself. When our first parents were removed from Eden into the broad, wild world, which was henceforth to be their home, their work was to be to cultivate it. God is not going to renovate the earth by miracles, but by the hands of those appointed to such a service. Under it we behold the work being done. Labor, directed by science and skill and sustained by wealth, is rapidly changing the face of the earth. It is straightening and uplifting and smoothing away; it is removing obstructions, fertilizing, planting, adorning; it is digging light and warmth from the ground, and with these extinguishing night and winter; with its mighty steamships it is weaving webs of commerce across the ocean, and laying nerves of intelligence along its beds, and so abolishing the sea; with its wondrous glasses which penetrate the skies, which collect and decompose the light, and tell us the composition of the heavenly orbs, and with the harnessed lightning, which now runs to carry man's messages and work his machines, it has made the very heavens, compared with what they once were, new. And so,

finally, will be attained that physical perfection of the world which is foreshadowed as among the triumphs of Christ its King. He is to be, by his truth and power in the hearts of men, the new Creator, who is to make all things new. Thus is he preparing his tabernacle among men, in which he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more. The first things are passed away."

CHAPTER VI.

THE VICTORY.

“THEN cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death.” 1 Cor. 15: 24-26.

The age of conquest shall end in universal *victory*. We have before spoken of Christ's reign as a militant one, appointed over a realm in rebellion against its rightful sovereign. It was the distinctive end of his administration to restore it to its allegiance, and this end, during all the long ages of its continuance, has been steadfastly kept in view. At last it shall be crowned with success. “He must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.”

To appreciate fully this language of the apostle we must recur, as in former cases, to the conceptions of the Jews as to the origin of sin and death. Whatever modern skepticism may say on the subject, the devil was a very real being in their system of belief. It was in his temptation of our first parents that sin originated, and death as the fruit of sin. From that time he is represented as having a kingdom on earth antagonistic to the kingdom of Jehovah. Matt. 12: 26; Luke 11: 18. He is called

"the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4: 4), and "the prince of this world." John 12: 31; 14: 30; 16: 11. Other evil spirits subject to his authority are called "his angels." Matt. 25: 41. He is "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the sons of disobedience." Eph. 2: 2. He is the leader of "principalities and powers, the world-rulers of this darkness, the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Eph. 6: 12; Rom. 8: 38. In this capacity of the prince of evil he is ever active in inciting to sin. He filled the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Ghost. Acts 6: 3. He prompted Judas to betray his Lord. John 13: 2. He instigated the hostility of the Pharisees to Jesus. John 8: 45. He afflicted men with disease, evil possessions, and all kinds of suffering. Acts 10: 38. And as his crowning terror, he had the "power of death," by which he kept men all their lives in bondage. Heb. 2: 14.

Now, in conformity with these representations of the power and malevolence of Satan, we find that the work of Christ as King and Saviour is described as the defeat of Satan and the destruction of his kingdom. The first grand prophecy of the future was that the seed of the tempted and sinning woman should bruise the tempter's head. When Jesus began his works of mercy he cast out devils. When the seventy, returning from their mission, reported the wonderful fact that they had power to do the same, their Master exulted in spirit as already witnessing the downfall of the enemy's kingdom. "I

beheld," said he, "Satan fallen as lightning from heaven." Luke 10: 18. It was his to "bind the strong man, and despoil him of his goods." Matt. 12: 29. It was "to this end that he was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3: 8. Nay, even the last and most dreaded power of the great adversary should be wrested from him. Jesus himself died "that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. 2: 14, 15.

It is precisely the same truth, then, I cannot doubt, which is meant to be asserted in this chapter of the resurrection. This is the end, the consummation, when the reigning Messiah shall have wrested from Satan his usurped kingdom over man, and delivered it to the Father from whom it was stolen, having put down (Gr. brought to nought) all rebellious rule, authority and power. For by the scope of his appointment as Messianic King, he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last, the supreme one of all, is death.

From the Jewish, then—which is, too, the Bible—standpoint, no more pregnant prophecy of the coming era of holiness and blessedness could have been uttered than the subjugation of the kingdom of Satan, the putting down of all evil rule, authority, and power. It will be in truth a millennium, not of duration, but of glory, of which the far inferior thousand years of his binding in the abyss, that ended

his one work of making war on the church, was but a faint type and pledge. That was to end persecution; this will end all his devilish work on earth. That terminated his career for ever as a foe in arms, reeking with the blood of the saints; this will end it in his whole character and capacity as an enemy of God and his kingdom on earth.

I will not presume to imagine what this world will become when sin is destroyed, and when all its inhabitants and all its forces shall become holy to the Lord. Under the inspiration of such a theme the prophets labored with raptures unutterable. Language was all too poor to set forth the wonders that beamed upon their ecstatic vision. All sublime imagery, all grouping of what was beauty to the eye and melody to the ear, of what was grateful to sense and inciting to expectation and assuring to hope, was used by them, and when they had said all, it remained to add that "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

So shall be accomplished the Kingly function of the Lord under his Parousia. It is a work begun at his ascension, carried forward through the successive ages of persecution, conquest, and victory, and then perpetuated in a reign of righteousness and blessedness for ever. I hope to show that his associated works as the Life-Giver and Judge are complementary and auxiliary to this, the three together constituting the work of that Parousia which he promised

to his people, and which he bade them make their inspiration and their hope.

“Earth, thou grain of sand on the shore of the universe of God; thou Bethlehem amongst the princely cities of the heavens; thou art and remainest the loved one amongst ten thousand suns and worlds, the chosen of God! Thee will he again visit, and then thou wilt prepare a throne for him, as thou gavest him a manger cradle. In his radiant glory thou wilt rejoice, as thou didst once drink his blood and tears, and mourn his death. On thee has the Lord a great work to complete!”¹

¹Pressel, quoted by Geikie, *Life of Christ*, Vol. II., p. 608.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PERPETUITY OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

THE views I have advanced in the preceding chapters will be objected to on the ground that they omit all mention of the Resurrection and General Judgment, as related to the consummation of Christ's kingdom; also, as being inconsistent with the commonly received doctrines of his ultimate surrender of that kingdom to the Father, and the end of the present world. The first two of these topics I have purposely deferred for consideration by themselves; the remaining two may appropriately be considered here.

The doctrine of the surrender by Christ of his kingdom to the Father is stated by Dr. Hodge, thus: "That dominion to which he was exalted after his resurrection, when all power in heaven and earth was committed into his hands—this kingdom which he exercises as the Theanthropos, and which extends over all principalities and powers, he is to deliver up when the work of redemption is accomplished. He was invested with this dominion in his mediatorial character, for the purpose of carrying on the work to its consummation. When that is done, *i. e.*, when he has subdued all his enemies, then he will no longer reign over the universe as mediator."¹

¹ Com. 1 Cor. 15: 24.

. This is, surely, a remarkable doctrine. That so great a change should take place in the relations of the Persons of the Godhead to each other and to man; that an office so august, to which Christ was appointed from eternity, and the purpose of which was to secure the eternal salvation of man, should itself be but temporary, is one that tasks all our powers to conceive of. That a reign so august should cease at the moment of victory; that a throne should be abandoned just when it becomes an undisputed one; that a kingdom should be given up when it has attained universal peace and rest, are propositions, to be received indeed if sufficiently revealed, but in support of which we certainly have a right to demand the very clear testimony of God's word.

It is no less astonishing that such a truth, if it be a truth, is taught in but a single passage of the Scriptures. Christ himself, when so fully predicting the events of his Parousia, gives not a hint of the kind. The Seer of Patmos caught not a glimpse of it in all the grand apocalypse disclosed to him. None of the apostolic writers, save one, makes the slightest allusion to it, and he only in a single incidental remark while discussing another topic. Of course, all this does not disprove its truth, but it does excite our surprise, and warrant a very careful examination of the passage supposed to teach it.

That passage is the one before considered in part in 1 Cor. 15: 24, 25, 28. "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father.—For he must reign till he hath put all

his enemies under his feet.—And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.”

Upon the face of it this is *military* language. It speaks of war and conquest. The “kingdom” referred to is the authority vested in a commander over an enemy and his territory. It is not the peaceful reign of a sovereign over obedient and loving subjects, blest under his sway, to whom his abdication would be the greatest calamity that could happen to them.

In this sense the surrender is natural,—indeed, it becomes a necessity by the very circumstances. When the war is over, the general, of course, gives back his commission. But this by no means implies that he will not, either by original appointment or by a new election, continue to govern in a civil capacity. Washington resigned his commission to Congress, but was immediately after elevated to the Presidency, an office embracing the supreme military and civil power both. So Christ received from the Father both the Messianic sword and scepter, the symbol of conquest and the symbol of peace, and it is a great mistake to assume that the laying aside of the one, when its work is done, involves the relinquishment, also, of the other.

The two divine offices of the reigning Christ are presented to us in near proximity, and with the utmost sublimity of conception and language, in the last chapters of the Apocalypse. First, we have the

Conqueror, the Dux or Emperor. "Behold a white horse, and he that sat thereon, called Faithful and True; and in righteousness doth he judge and make war. And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood, and his name is called THE WORD OF GOD. And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should rule the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." Rev. 19: 11-16. Then succeeds the description of the battle; the capture and doom of the enemy and the judgment of his followers; and the curtain falls forever on the dreadful scene.

A short time passes, and it rises again upon another and far different one. It is a scene of peace and joy. The late Victor appears once more, but how? As divested of his royal dignities? Far from it. True, he bears the sword no longer. The blood-stained military cloak (*ιμάτιον*) has been put off, and the flaming eyes of his anger no more transfix his enemies. He is now the Divine BRIDEGROOM, sitting with the Father himself in his throne (*sunthronos*), and receiving his glorified and spotless Bride. It is a union implying still a *reign*, for he is

an *enthroned* Bridegroom, but it is the reign of hearts, the empire of a husband over his wife. By no other figure can human language adequately convey an idea of the dignity, the tenderness, and the blessedness of this kingdom. "The throne of God *and of the Lamb* shall be therein, and his servants shall do him service, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads—and they shall reign forever and ever."

This view of a subject, confessedly one of the most recondite in the Scriptures, is very nearly that of the elder President Edwards, as given in the "Observations," lately edited by Prof. E. C. Smyth. p. 49. "Christ was invested (at his ascension) with a twofold dominion over the world, one vicarious, or as the Father's vice-gerent, which shall be resigned at the end of the world; the other as Christ, God-man, and Head and Husband of the church, and in this latter respect he will never resign his dominion, but will reign forever and ever."

The perpetuity of Christ's kingdom in this aspect of it, not as a reign of conquest, but of peace and rest, is too often and too plainly asserted to remain a matter of doubt.

First. It is often and with the utmost emphasis affirmed that his kingdom *is to be without end*. "The God of heaven," said Daniel, "shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." "There was given him do-

minion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 2: 44; 7: 14. "Unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder. * * * Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." Isa. 9: 6, 7. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1: 32, 33. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews quotes from the XLVth psalm, and expressly applies to Christ in his mediatorial kingdom the words of David, "To the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Heb. 1: 10. In the Apocalypse John blends with his salutation to the churches the solemn doxology, "Unto Him that loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood, * * * to him be glory and dominion for ever, Amen." Rev. 1: 5, 6. At the sounding of the seventh angel, which signalizes the very epoch before us, when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ,"—even in that moment of supreme victory, it is declared, not that his dominion shall now be surrendered, but

that "he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 11: 15. And in the New Jerusalem state, which is universally conceded to be subsequent to the grand consummation and the delivery of the kingdom to the Father, we find the Son still on the throne, shedding the light of his glory upon the redeemed, and receiving their worship for ever. "The Lord God Almighty—and the Lamb are the temple of it." "The glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof," etc. Rev. 21: 22, 23.

It is not, of course, to be supposed that these passages are overlooked or disregarded by those who believe in the surrender of Christ's kingdom, and his ceasing to reign as Mediator. Their idea is that after that event, when the redeemed of earth are all gathered in safety into heaven, and all sin is put down or destroyed, when God alone will "rule with majesty serene and undisturbed,"¹ Christ will then be, in a subordinate sense, "head and sovereign"² over his people; and that it is this fact only which is intended to be taught in the passages quoted. Viewing the state of blessedness which they will have attained in heaven after death and judgment and the ending of all sin and all the powers of sin as a "kingdom," still under Christ's immediate care, that this kingdom will never end,—which is simply saying that the happiness of the redeemed will be eternal. But while this is an undoubted and glorious truth, it does not seem possible to make it that

¹ Kling, in Lange's Com. 1 Cor. 15: 1-28, p. 318.

² Hodge, Com. on 1 Cor., p. 330.

which these passages mean to affirm. If we can understand the nature of a mediatorial kingdom,—a kingdom of grace, wherein are exercised the divine prerogatives of giving the Spirit, intercession, pardon and justification,—a kingdom, having indeed its throne in heaven at the right hand of the Father, but existing and carried forward here on earth,—the kingdom of heaven among men,—it is this kingdom that is referred to in these predictions of its perpetuity.

Look again at the language. It was the kingdom that was to be set up “in the days of these kings,” and that should embrace all peoples, nations, and languages, which should stand for ever. This, most surely, was the mediatorial kingdom, wrested from all enemies, and made loyal to its rightful sovereign; and it is of this that the perpetuity is affirmed. Is not “the increase of his government and peace” something to be realized in time? Does not the “throne of David” represent his kingdom among men, and the “house of Jacob” his universal earthly church? The throne which belongs to the Son for ever and ever—is it not one which, according to the argument in Heb. 1: 8, pertains to him as Mediator? Surely, there can be no doubt on this point. Indeed, I know of nothing in all the range of the Scriptures, apart from this solitary text, which warrants or suggests any such distinction between Christ’s reign as Mediator, and that which is to be given him after delivering up the kingdom.

In the closing visions of Isaiah, which are univer-

sally held to relate to Christ's kingdom, the blessedness and glory of that kingdom are set forth under the figure of "new heavens and a new earth,"—and the description which follows shows that reference must be had to a state of things on earth. Isa. 65: 17–25. It is then added that that state of things shall be perpetual. Isa. 66: 22, 23. "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." There can be no question, surely, of the meaning of this prophecy. The church of God, the spiritual and holy seed of Abraham constituting a new Jerusalem, shall maintain his worship from age to age, in which all the living family of man shall engage, having ever before them, as typified in the ceaseless burnings of the Vale of Hinnom, the punishment of the wicked. "They shall *remain before me*, saith the Lord;" language excluding the idea of a termination. "The idea is," says Mr. Barnes, "that the state of things here described would be permanent and abiding."

Besides these express testimonies to the perpetuity of Christ's kingdom, there are other considerations of scarcely less weight. That kingdom he received as a *reward* for his humiliation and sufferings in the work of redemption. "Wherefore, God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of

Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is *Lord*, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2: 9-11. But is that reward to cease the moment in which the work for which it is bestowed is completed? "Are not the gifts and calling of God without repentance? Shall he so soon grow weary of honoring his Son? Shall the obedience of his people be crowned with eternal rewards, and the obedience of his Son unto death, even the death of the cross, be crowned with only a temporary dominion and glory? And shall he cease to be Lord and King at the very time that every knee shall bow to him and every tongue confess that he is the Lord? Shall that kingdom which he first purchased with his own blood, and then secured to himself by putting down all rule and all authority and power opposed to his reign, be surrendered at the very moment when every tongue shall confess that he is the rightful sovereign of the universe?"¹

It is, perhaps, another form of the same truth which is given in the statement that Christ was "appointed *heir* of all things." Heb. 1: 2. Compare Matt. 11: 27; 28: 18; John 17: 2, 7, 9, 22. That is, he received from the Father the created universe, to be possessed and governed by him, as a son receives a patrimony from his father. What else can be denoted by this figure than his perfect and perpetual right to that which he inherits? If the father

¹ Van Valkenburgh, in Am. Bib. Rep., Oct. 1839, p. 442.

takes back what is thus given, he disinherits his son. Is Christ, then, the moment he comes into full and undisputed possession of his kingdom, to be disinherited? Is the temporary occupancy thus implied all that is meant,—a tenure which, as compared with the eternity which follows, is barely for a moment?

Further; it is the participation of the honors and the felicity of this kingdom which is to constitute the blessedness of the redeemed. They are to be “joint-heirs with Christ;” to “sit with him in his throne;” to “reign with Christ;” to be partakers of the glory given him by the Father, etc. Rom. 8: 17; Rev. 3: 21; 2 Tim. 2: 12; John 17: 22. What, then, is to become of their reward if this kingdom is transient,—if it is to be surrendered to the Father and be held by Christ himself no more?

It is to be remembered, also, that Christ's office as Priest is expressly declared to be eternal. Nothing can be more certain than that this office pertains to him as Mediator, and its exercise is one of the functions of his mediatorial kingdom. It implies that its administration is based on the great sacrifice offered by him for sin, the presentation of that sacrifice before his Father's throne in behalf of his people, and the sovereign act of justification bestowed on them because of their acceptance thereof by faith. But these priestly offices of the Redeemer are never to cease. He is “a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek.” He “ever (πάντοτε) liveth to make intercession for them.” “The Son who is consecrated for evermore,” etc. Heb. 5: 6; 7: 17, 21, 25.

28. And in the New Jerusalem itself, "the river of the water of life," the emblem of the eternal blessedness of the saints, "proceedeth out of the throne of God *and the Lamb*,"—a recognition of the priestly character of the Redeemer as the everlasting source of life and salvation to men.

I will cite only one more passage bearing on this topic, which, it seems to me, is of itself absolutely decisive. In the twelfth of Hebrews the apostle is warning his brethren in the most solemn manner against the rejection of the gospel. He reminds them of the doom of those who rejected the Mosaic dispensation at Sinai,—a dispensation inaugurated by lightnings and earthquakes in token of the awful presence of Jehovah. "The whole mount quaked greatly." Ex. 19: 18. But the new dispensation of the Messiah is grander than that because more abiding. This he proves from a passage in Haggai 2: 6. "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." And this phrase he says, "yet once more"—ἐτι ἅπας—indicates a change—μετὰθῆσιν—(literally, a passing away) of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." In other words, the divine arrangement is to be changed but *once*, i. e. when the Mosaic gives place to the Messianic,—of course, then, the latter is to continue unchanged. "Wherefore," he adds, "we receiving a kingdom *which cannot be moved*, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably and with godly fear." We cannot well conceive any thing more decisive

than this. Not only the terms themselves but the argument requires the perpetuity of Christ's kingdom. To affirm that another *metathesis* will take place, by which it shall come to an "end," in the sense of a termination, seems to me to be, if any thing can be, an explicit contradiction of the inspired word of God.

We quote again the admirable language of President Edwards. "Christ's mediatorial kingdom will never be delivered up to the Father. It would imply a great absurdity to suppose that Christ should deliver up or commit the work of a Mediator to the Father, as if the Father himself should thenceforward take upon him the work of mediating between himself and man. Christ's mediation between the Father and the elect will continue after the end of the world, and he will reign as a *middle Person* between the Father and them to all eternity. When the end comes, that relation that Christ stands in to his church, as the Father's viceroy over her, shall cease, and shall be swallowed up in the relation of a vital and *conjugal Head*, or Head of influence and enjoyment, which is more natural and essential to the main ends and purposes of his union with them. And henceforth his dominion or kingship over them will be no other than what naturally flows from, or is included in, such an headship. And now God will be all in all. The church now shall be brought to God the Father, who by his economical office sustains the dignity, and appears as the fountain of the Deity, and her enjoyment of him shall be more direct. Christ, God-man, shall now no longer be in-

stead of the Father to them, but, as I may express it, their head of enjoyment of God ; as it were, the eye to receive the rays of divine glory and love for the whole body, and the ear to hear the sweet expressions of his love, and the mouth to taste the sweetness and feed on the delights of the enjoyment of God ; the root of the whole tree, planted in God, to receive sap and nourishment for every branch." Observations, pp. 88, 89.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE END OF THE WORLD.

THE phrase is not unfrequently found in the New Testament. Matt. 13: 39, 40, 49. "The harvest is the end of the world." Matt. 24: 3, "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" Matt. 28: 20, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."¹

The original word here translated world is *aion* (*αἰών*), which, as all who are tolerably conversant with Jewish phraseology know, has no reference to the earth as a planet. It is properly a designation of *time*, nearly corresponding to our word *age*. The Jews regarded all time as divided into successive periods, to which they applied this term; such as that which preceded creation, the antediluvian, the one covered by the duration of the Mosaic theocracy, and that in which the Messiah was to reign. This is probably its meaning in Heb. 1: 2; "Through whom—Christ—he made the worlds," i. e., he established and carried forward the orderly succession of the ages. The last two of these periods are most frequently mentioned in the Scriptures. Living, as the sacred writers did, under the Mosaic dispensa-

¹ In all these instances the Revised Version puts in the margin the rendering "the consummation of the age."

tion, they denominated its period as "the *aion* that now is," and that of the Messiah, then future, as "the *aion* that is to come." The two together, covering the whole duration of the future, came to be equivalent to that duration, in other words, *everlasting*,—as in the declaration, "Whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world (*aion*) nor in that which is to come." Matt. 12: 32. When, passing the boundaries of time, they wished to speak of eternal things, as of the retributions of the righteous and of the wicked, or of the existence of God, they intensified the idea by reduplications of the same word. "To whom be the glory for ever and ever" (Gr., through ages of ages). Gal. 1: 5; Phil. 4: 20; 1 Tim. 1: 17; 1 Peter 5: 11. "They shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 22: 5. "The smoke of their torment goeth up forever and ever." Rev. 14: 11; 19: 3; 20: 10. In Eph. 3: 21, the expression is still more remarkable. "Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations, forever and ever,"—Gr., "through all the generations of the *aion* of the *aions*" (εἰς πᾶσας τὰς γενεὰς τοῦ αἰῶνος τῶν αἰώνων).¹

When our Lord and his apostles, therefore, spoke of the "end of the world," they used the word, we cannot doubt, in the sense that was customary in that day, the only sense in which it was possible to have been understood by those whom they addressed.

¹ See an exhaustive consideration of the import of this word in Prof. Tayler Lewis' "Six Days of Creation," pp. 352-385.

The parable of the tares, like nearly all the others delivered by our Saviour in that stage of his ministry, was designed to teach the contrast between the coming kingdom of heaven and that under which they had hitherto lived. Of the latter, all were reckoned as subjects who were of the seed of Abraham, whether strictly righteous or not. This was the one ground of pride and self-confidence among the Jews that constantly hindered their reception of the gospel. John had to dash it in pieces in those fearful words, "Ye brood of vipers—think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father." A large part of the Sermon on the Mount is directed to the same end. So with these parables. In the field which God had first sown by Moses with good seed, the tares were then growing with the wheat, and in that closing portion of the age greatly outnumbered and choked it. But in the end of that age, i. e., under his own new kingdom of heaven, a different law would prevail. None could be a member of that kingdom but by a new birth, higher than any earthly pedigree. John 3: 3. Not saying, "Lord, Lord," would make one a subject of it, but doing the will of God. Matt. 7: 21. All others would be gathered out of his field, and cast like a fruitless tree or winnowed chaff into the fire. This was what Malachi had predicted of the times of the Messiah (Mal. 3: 2, 5; 4: 1), and John, when preaching the near approach of the kingdom. Matt. 3: 7-12. To the same effect was the parable of the drag-net. And the time and the signs when this

great change should take place,—when the old imperfect Jewish *aion* should be superseded by the new spiritual *aion* to come, were what the disciples inquired about on the Mount of Olives, after Christ had uttered his denunciations against the city and temple, which they evidently understood as referring to that event. It seems to me plain that no reference could have been intended by them to the destruction of the earth as a planet, or its discontinuance as an abode for mankind, and no doctrine of that sort is taught by the phrase they used.

On the other hand, taking the Greek word which was used by the sacred writers when they meant to speak of the earth, either as a planet, or as the abode of man—*κόσμος*—we find no “end” any where asserted of it. Matt. 4: 8, “All the kingdoms of the world.” 13: 35, “From the foundation of the world.” Luke 11: 5, “From the beginning of the world.” John 17: 5, “Before the world was.” Acts 17: 24, “God that made the world and all things therein.” Rom. 1: 8, “Your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world,” etc. I repeat it, of the world in this sense—*κόσμος*—no end is ever asserted or implied. There is no such phrase as the end or completion of the *κόσμος*.¹ And yet it is in this sense of the term world, that the phrase is commonly understood. A predicate which belongs solely to *one* word is without any warrant transferred to

¹In 2 Pet. 3: 6 the word is applied to the antediluvian “world,” which it is declared perished (*ἀπώλετο*) in the deluge. Obviously it was not the earth as a *planet*, but its inhabitants, that was meant.

another of entirely different meaning, simply because both are unfortunately represented by the same English word "world," and from this unauthorized combination is made to teach an idea which probably never entered the thought of any inspired author whatever.

There is, however, a remarkable passage in 2 Peter 3: 3-13, which is constantly referred to and relied upon as teaching the doctrine before us beyond all question. "The heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.—The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.—The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."

In endeavoring to ascertain the meaning of this important passage, it may be remarked :

1. That we are not to interpret the language according to the revelations of modern science. Geology and Astronomy have taught us many facts as to the nature and history of our globe and of the material universe, of which the ancients were wholly ignorant. They supposed the earth to be a vast plain resting upon immovable foundations (2 Sam. 22: 16; Job 38: 4; Ps. 104: 5; Prov. 8: 29; Isa. 24: 18; 40: 21; 51: 13; Jer. 31: 37; Mic. 6: 2); the heavens a "firmament" or solid expanse, to which the sun, moon, and stars were fastened as lu-

minous disks, and from which they might be detached and fall to the ground like the leaves of autumn. Gen. 1: 7, 17; Isa. 42: 5; Job 37: 18; Rev. 6: 13, 14. The idea that these were worlds or heavenly bodies, in our sense of these terms, had then probably never entered the mind of any man except, possibly, some speculating student of the stars. Hence, I cannot accept the translation given by Alford of the word "elements," as "the heavenly bodies." Peter most assuredly knew nothing of any such bodies, and could not have meant to express such an idea.

2. The passage cannot mean that the material universe, or our earth and its skies, is to be *annihilated*. For the "new heavens and the new earth," which the apostle says were promised to succeed, are certainly the same material worlds as the present. That promise is in Isa. 65: 17-25, which upon any reasonable interpretation is clearly something that is to be realized on this existing earth. "It could not be demonstrated from this phrase (burnt up)," says Mr. Barnes, "that the world would be annihilated by fire; it could be proved only that it will undergo important changes. So far as the action of fire is concerned, the *form* of the earth may pass away, and its aspect be changed; but unless the direct power which created it interposes to annihilate it, the *matter* which now composes it will still be in existence. Whether it is God's purpose to *annihilate* any portion of the matter he has made, does not appear from his word."¹

¹ Notes, 2 Peter 3: 10.

It is sometimes alleged that stars have disappeared from the visible heavens,—some apparently in a blaze, as if on fire; from which it is inferred that the same thing may not improbably happen to our sun and his attending planets. To which I reply: granting the phenomena as described, they prove nothing. Recent astronomy reveals vast numbers of periodic stars;—i. e., those revolving about each other, or about a common center, and undergoing in consequence incessant variations in brightness, some even at times becoming and remaining long invisible. These alternations, in some instances of immense periods so that there is a total disappearance for many centuries even, are no proof of their passing out of existence. And as to the appearance of blazing, as if on fire, we need but to look at our own sun, which for unknown ages has literally been thus on fire, glowing in the flames of incandescent hydrogen, yet it is not consumed, and gives no indication that it ever will be.¹

3. As little, I think, does the passage mean that this world, *as an abode for man*, in the natural order of things, is to be destroyed. In this sense of the

¹Humboldt protests against the hypothesis of destruction,—of the actual combustion of the stars which have disappeared. "That which we see no more," he says, "has not necessarily ceased to exist.—The eternal play of apparent création and apparent destruction does not prove the annihilation of matter; it is a pure transition towards new forms, determined by the action of new forces. Some stars which have become obscure may again suddenly become luminous by the renewal of the same conditions which, in the first instance, developed the light." *The Heavens*, p. 367.

term world,—*κόσμος*,—as already remarked, the Scriptures never speak of an “end” of it.

We should not forget that both the author of this epistle and those to whom it was addressed were *Jews*, whose conceptions of the earth and its history were derived from the Old Testament Scriptures. To the Jews, this was *the one Book*,—we might almost say the *only* book of instruction on all subjects whatever. It was their manual, not only of theology and morals, but of history and science and law and poetry. They read and taught it to their children (2 Tim. 3: 14, 15); they heard it read in the synagogues every Sabbath day. Luke 4: 16; Acts 13: 27; 2 Cor. 3: 15. Its language, its figures of speech, its way of conceiving and representing things, were imbibed with their mother’s milk, and were as familiar as their own vernacular speech. Of the speculations of oriental or Grecian philosophy, few knew any thing whatever. Of course, I do not mean to say that Inspiration might not impart to a Jew new truths, but even these he would express necessarily in modes and terms with which the nation was familiar, and without which he could not be understood. It seems to me self-evident, then, that the proper clew to the meaning of Peter’s language is to be found in the Old Testament, and in what we know to have been the prevailing opinions of the Jews in that age.

Turning, then, to the older Scriptures, we find their language, in respect to the duration and destiny of the earth, directly opposite to the assumed mean-

ing of this passage. Ps. 78: 69. "He built his sanctuary like high places, like the earth which he hath established for ever." Ps. 93: 1. "The world also is established that it cannot be moved." Ps. 104: 5. "Who laid the foundation of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever." Ps. 48: 6. "He hath established them—for ever and ever; he hath made a decree which shall not pass." Eccl. 1: 4. "One generation passeth away and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever." Even in those places where the comparative transitoriness of the universe is used to lighten by contrast the eternity and immutability of God, the implication is the same. Ps. 102: 26, 27. "They—the earth and the heavens,—shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them and they shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." The meaning is that God's eternity shall exceed the most eternal things. So with the words of Christ, Matt. 24: 35. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." It is duration intensified by outrunning the ideal types of unchangeableness. It would be a sorry anti-climax to ascribe to the divine existence and promises a duration only exceeding what was confessedly transient.

We have a remarkable confirmation of this view of the Old Testament teachings in the writings of Philo. He was a learned Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, of the priestly family of Aaron, born a

few years before Christ. His writings exercised a wide influence over the opinions of the Jews. One of his works is an elaborate treatise on "The Incorruptibility of the World," by which he means the perpetuity of "the heaven and the earth and all that is therein." We cannot here follow his peculiar course of reasoning, which he professes to base upon the Scriptures, especially Genesis I, but his conclusion is pertinent to our topic.

"Therefore we are naturally led to conclude that the whole earth will not be dissolved by water, which its bosoms contain; nor again will fire be extinguished by the air, nor again the air be burnt up and consumed by fire, since the divine law has placed it as a boundary to keep all these elements distinct from one another."

He represents Moses as saying in Genesis that the world was created indestructible; that days and nights, and seasons and years, and the sun and moon which measure time, "having received an immortal portion in common with the whole heaven, continue forever indestructible."

He argues that if the world is to be destroyed, it must be by some other efficient cause, or by God. Not the former, for there is nothing which the world does not surround and contain. "On the other hand, to say that it is destroyed by God is *the most impious of all possible assertions*; for God is the cause, not of disorder and irregularity and destruction, but of order, and beautiful regularity, and life, and of every good thing, as is confessed by all those whose opinions are based on truth." Sect. 16.

We may assert then with confidence, that the very impressive language of Peter could not have been taken by a Jew of that day as teaching the end of this material world. It would be an idea of which he had never heard, one which he would think contradicted the Scriptures themselves, and which in the estimation of the most learned men of the nation was absolutely "impious."

And yet the same phraseology, understood in another sense, was perfectly familiar. Take, for instance, the prophecy by Isaiah of the overthrow of Idumæa for her enmity to God's people. Its resemblance to that used by Peter will appear the closer if we suppose, as is altogether probable, that he and his brethren read from the Septuagint version. I give the two, literally translated, side by side.

ISAIAH 34 : 4, 9, 10.

All the powers of the heavens shall be melted, and the heaven shall be rolled up like a scroll.—And her land shall be on fire like pitch, night and day, and shall not be extinguished for ever.

2 PETER 3 : 10, 12.

The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the elements being burned shall be dissolved.—The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements being burned shall melt, and the earth and the works in it shall be burned up.

So, elsewhere, whenever the Lord appears to chastise wicked men and nations, his presence and the effects of it are set forth in similar language. Ps. 46: 6. "The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved; I bear up the pillars of it." Nahum 1: 6. "The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea,

the world and they that dwell therein." Isa. 24: 19. "The earth is utterly broken down; the earth is clean dissolved; the earth is moved exceedingly." All this language, read habitually in private and in the synagogues, taught the Jews the terrors of God's judgments upon wicked nations, but never for a moment the literal end of the world. Could Peter, without a word of explanation, have used it in a different sense?

4. I understand, then, his reference to have been to the well-known Jewish idea of "*the aion that now is*;" in other words, to the system of the Mosaic dispensation, as already explained. Let the following particulars be noted:

(1) That *aion*, or world, was *to pass away*. It was to be destroyed totally and forever. So with "the heavens and the earth" in Peter. Prof. Stuart well objects to the common idea of a reconstructed earth, to arise from the ruins of the old one after it shall have been dissolved and purified by fire. "This new heaven and new earth are not to be constructed by fitting up and vamping anew the old and worn out systems. The first heavens and earth *pass away*." Com. Rev. 21: 1.

(2) That *aion* was to perish *with a great noise*. There was to be the "great sound of a trumpet," and the wail of "all the tribes of the earth," the "falling of the stars from heaven," and the shaking of "the powers of the heavens." Matt. 24: 29-31. There was in literal verity the terrible crash of a burning city, the overthrow of palaces and temples

and walls, the despairing cries of the dying, and the triumphant shouts of the victors. Taken both figuratively and literally, no single word could better describe the overthrow of the Jewish temple, city, and nation, with all their venerated and once divine institutions, than that used by Peter—*ροξήδον*.

(3) That *aion* was to expire amid the same sort of *physical phenomena* described by Peter,—the wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath, blood and fire, and vapor of smoke, the extinguished sun and moon, etc. (Acts 2: 19, 20). Who can doubt that all these have the same signification in both cases? What clearer demonstration, therefore, that the events of which these are the concomitants are the same?

(4) For the time being, that *aion* was "*reserved unto fire*." The word translated reserved is, literally, *treasured up*, something kept for a certain time or use. Now, this was precisely what John was commissioned to preach,—that the old dispensation was just going to give place to the new kingdom, and the old fruitless trees, the worthless chaff of the old threshing floor, were then to be given to the fire. The parable of the tares shows the field, with its mixed crop of good and bad, spared for a little while unto the harvest, at the "end" of "this *aion*," when the tares shall be gathered and burned in the fire. Matt. 13: 40. The drag-net shows the wicked at "the end of this age" cast into the furnace of fire. In both of the particulars—that the end of each world was to be "fire," and that each for a brief

space longer was treasured or kept for that destination,—the parallel between the two is perfect.

(5) Both the "*aion*" that now is and the "end of this world" should be at the Parousia of Christ. Matt. 24: 3. 2 Pet. 3: 4. That "the day of the Lord," in verse 19, was the thing which the scoffers derided when they asked where was the promise of his Parousia, is too obvious to need proof.

(6) They were both, therefore, in like manner *near*, and *objects for watching and expectation*. It was because it had not already come, Peter says, that the scoffers derided the expectation of it. Nevertheless, he says, it will surely come, and bids his readers to be looking for and hastening it. As heretofore remarked, this implies the near approach of the event, for it is impossible to be watching and waiting for what is thousands of years distant.

(7) The dissolving of "*the elements*" mentioned by Peter, points to the same event as the end of the *aion*. The original word—*στοιχεῖα*—occurs elsewhere in the New Testament five times, and in all with nearly the same meaning. Two of them are in Gal. 4: 3 and 9. "We, when we were children, were held in bondage under the *rudiments* of the world." "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly *rudiments* whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" This clearly refers to the imperfect rites and doctrines of the Jewish law. Alford says, "All the enactments peculiar to the law, some of which are expressly named, verse 10." The next two instances are in Col. 2: 8, 20. "Take heed lest there shall be

any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the *rudiments* of the world, and not after Christ." "If ye died with Christ from the *rudiments* of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances," etc. "Ritualistic observances," says Alford. The only remaining instance is Heb. 5: 12, "Ye have need again that some one teach you the *rudiments* of the first principles of the oracles of God." Here the reference is not to the Mosaic law, but to the elementary truths of Christianity, though the same idea of what is rudimentary and imperfect is still implied. Now Peter says that in the Parousia, or day of the Lord, the *elements* shall be dissolved. What can this be but that the imperfect ritual and doctrinal system of Judaism, to which the early Hebrew converts were once in bondage, and were ever trying to go back, should be wholly abolished? They were the chaff and stubble of the old system, which should be burned up at the introduction of the new and higher kingdom of Christ.


(8) The events attending the end of the *aion* seem to be described by the Apocalyptist in Rev. 6: 12-17, in language almost identical with that of Peter. "There was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig-tree casteth her unripe figs when she is shaken of a great wind. And the heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up,

and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." I cannot doubt that this refers to the same subject,—the distresses that were to come upon Jerusalem and Palestine before and at the destruction of the city; but whether this interpretation be accepted or not, is not important here. That the language does not describe the end of the world is clear from the fact that a long series of events in human history is represented as following after it.

I do not, then, find the doctrine of the end of the world, either as a planet or as the scene of human life and probation, taught in the Scriptures. As read from the standpoint of the sacred writers, and of the times in which they lived, and with conceptions of the divine arrangements such as they had been taught, we find only intimations of moral revolutions which were to introduce the new kingdom of Christ, attended, indeed, with unparalleled sufferings on the part of the guilty nation who refused to receive him as their king, but not implying changes in the structure of the physical universe, or any end, however remote, of the duration of a kingdom inaugurated in a manner so imposing.

And with these conclusions from Scripture, harmonize, we believe, both reason and science. Often has the question thrust itself upon our thought, why should this world cease? It is a theater which affords to the higher orders of intelligence the grandest displays of the divine wisdom and goodness. "We are made a spectacle to the world [the universe]—to angels and to men." "Into these things

the angels desire to look." Neither the efficacy nor the glory of the cross of Jesus will ever cease. The sacrifice for sin here offered was "offered forever." Heb. 10: 12. The priesthood he assumed was an unchangeable one. The divine Comforter who is given to renew and sanctify souls, is to abide with us for ever. John 14: 16. If the existence of man, as shown by his creation, was "good" (Gen. 1: 31),—a work over which "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38: 7); if there is joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth; if it be a source of satisfaction to the heart of the Saviour to see of the travail of his soul, and to bring many sons unto glory; why should that which so fills the universe and its Creator with joy, ever be brought to an end? Let it have continued six thousand years, or a million times six thousand, is there any conceivable reason why it should not be continued still as long again? If the preceding period brought joy and glory to God, will not the succeeding one? Will the Creator ever be weary of creating souls? Will the Spirit ever tire of new-creating? Will heaven be too full of the redeemed? Will the universe be too full of happiness? Rather, let us enlarge our conceptions of the scale of Jehovah's working, and of the magnitude of the kingdom which he has established in his Son; and let our raptured ascription be "unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,—unto him



be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus *unto all generations of the aion of the aions.*" Eph. 3: 20, 21.

Nor do I know any thing in science opposed to this conclusion. It is often argued, indeed, that the future dissolution of the earth by fire is made probable by the fact that it was once, in a by-gone geologic age, a molten mass, and that the numerous volcanoes still evince the existence of liquid fires within it. But God's works are progressive, and there is no reason to suppose that the processes by which the earth was brought from primeval chaos to be a *mundus*,—a world of order and beauty for the abode of man, are to be repeated, in this later stage of its existence. Doubtless the earth contains within itself forces adequate to its own dissolution, if such were the order of nature or of God. But so might the autumn, if God willed it, arrest its fruit-maturing work, and go to blossoming again. So might a man, by miracle, enter the second time into his mother's womb. But because nature has had her births is she never to be sure of her maturity? Is it her *law* to go backward? Is there to be a reversed Genesis written at the close of the Revelation?

But our business, at present, is theology, not natural science. It is to ask what is taught by the Bible, not by astronomy. Even if it shall ultimately be made probable, as a deduction of the nebular hypothesis, that the earth, by the process of cooling, will cease to be habitable, as the moon is supposed to be already, it would prove nothing to the purpose. Of such a theory the sacred writers could have

known nothing, and therefore asserted nothing. That result, if conceded, must be at such a distance as to be practically infinite.¹ There is no evidence that since man was placed on the earth the temperature of this planet has diminished by a single degree. Doubtless there was a time when a tropical climate reached far toward the poles; so there was a period when the polar ices extended near to the tropics. Astronomical cycles are, in such an inquiry as this, equivalent to eternities. Concede in regard to them whatever you will,—whatever in the progress of science may be ultimately demonstrated, it will still remain true that the Bible affirms nothing concerning them, and that, if not in the strictest scientific sense, yet in the spiritual and practical one, the earth, this home of man, the theater of redemption and salvation, “abideth for ever,” and that of the kingdom of the Messiah there shall be “no end.”²

¹ Mr. R. A. Proctor, who is one of the most prolific in speculations of this kind, reckons that the earth will reach that condition in “about *two hundred million years!*” *Mysteries of Time and Space*.

² I have made no allusion to the question which, as all scholars know, is of no little difficulty respecting the genuineness of this Epistle. Dr. Schaff remarks, “It is reckoned by Eusebius among the seven Antilegomena (disputed writings) and its Petrine authorship is doubted or denied in whole or in part by many eminent divines.” *Hist. Vol. I., p. 746*. The question is very fully discussed by Canon Farrar in the “*Early Days of Christianity*,” pp. 97-122. Upon the passage before us Dr. F. remarks: “There is not another passage in the whole New Testament which implies that the Parousia, for which the early Christians looked with such intense earnestness, so far from being manifested in that very generation, might not take place

for even a millennium hence. However we explain the phrase, 'since the fathers fell asleep,' the point of view seems to mark an age later than the true St. Peter. It seems to point to an epoch in which those who, like the Montánists, still expected the instant close of the age (in another sense than that in which it had already been accomplished by the fall of Jerusalem) were few in number." p. 108.

"One of the most doubtful of the Antilegomena." "It was understood [by the early church] that the so-called Antilegomena * * * were not to be used as authoritative sources of Christian doctrine." Prof. Ladd, *Doct. of Sac. Scripture*, Vol. I., pp. 162, 654.

CHAPTER X.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

THE Revelation which the seer on Patmos was commissioned to make to his brethren of the seven churches, to show unto them "things which must shortly come to pass," closes with the vision of the New Jerusalem. Our survey of the work of Christ as King would not be complete without a brief inquiry as to the import of this city, and its relations to his kingdom.

That the New Jerusalem is a symbolic representation of the Christian church, or the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, in some aspect of it, is universally believed. But when we ask in what aspect, and in what supposed period of it, we find a great variety of opinions. Some regard it as a symbol of the church in the Millennium, or latter-day glory. Some, among whom is Alford, assign it to the period after the General Judgment, as "descriptive of the consummation of the triumph and bliss of Christ's people with him in the eternal kingdom of God. This eternal kingdom is situated on the purified and renewed earth, become the blessed habitation of God with his glorified people." Some suppose it to be a representation of heaven.

It seems to me that if we bear in mind the objects for which, and the circumstances in which, this book

was written, together with certain indications which are given in the description itself, we shall find a clew to its import which we may accept with some firm confidence that it is the correct one. Let us remember that at that date the church, or visible Christianity, was relatively small and feeble. The eighteen centuries of history which have familiarized it to us in its vast extent and power had not yet existed. It was, at that moment, under the ban of the Empire which ruled the world. Its adherents were few and poor and weak. It was a question whether Christianity itself was not on the point of extinguishment, as a light divinely kindled, indeed, but unable to survive in the murky atmosphere and under the fierce tempests of a hostile world. We can readily imagine the misgivings which might have crept over the minds of the suffering saints as they contemplated these things,—the secret question which would steal into their thoughts whether they were not throwing themselves away; whether it would not turn out that they were following a delusion which would soon come to nought; and whether, therefore, it would not be wiser for them to make peace with their persecutors, submit themselves to the authority of the Emperor, and be restored to ease and comfort. In such circumstances, what could be more potent to reassure their faith than the lifting by a divine hand of the curtain of the future, and showing them in a grand scenic picture *what the church of God was to be when seen as a whole*, as outlined in the plan and purpose of its Lord? So Moses, before his death, having

forfeited his right to enter Canaan, was yet, in order to strengthen his faith and confirm his joy in the fulfillment of the promise to his people, permitted to ascend the lofty mountain-top and look off thence upon the goodly land in its length and breadth, that he might for once feast his eye with the anticipated beauty and glory of that which had so long filled his thoughts, and been the goal of all his desires.

If this view of the purport of this vision be correct, it will suggest to us the error of making the heavenly city symbolic of *any* particular period in the history of the church. I would rather see in it that church *as a whole*; its foundations already laid in the "twelve apostles of the Lamb," and its completion to be reached only in the grand consummation of the future.¹ It does seem to me, however, that it is the church *on earth* that is meant, and not in the heavenly world.

1. This appears to be required by the *designations of time* which are expressly given in connection with it. Not to insist upon the general statement in the title of the book, that it referred to things which "must shortly come to pass," we find the same declaration repeated immediately after the description of the city, and with manifest reference to it.

¹ "The new Jerusalem is not the description solely, if chiefly, of the state to which Christians may look forward beyond the grave; it is primarily the description of Christendom, the actual Christian society, idealized, no doubt, but intended, in all its chief spiritual features, to find its realization now and here. It presents to us *an ideal* towards which we are to strive as one capable of attainment." Fremantle, Gospel of the Secular Life. p. 63.

“And he said unto me, these sayings are faithful and true, and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must *shortly*—ἐν τάχει—be done.” Ch. 22: 6. I cannot think that this phrase can justly be applied to what should be thousands of years distant. If language was designed to communicate an intelligible idea, it must, if not otherwise qualified, be that idea which its terms naturally signify, and these certainly imply that the fulfillment, at least in its beginning, was then near at hand.

2. The language under which it is described shows its *correspondence with prophecies* which we know related to Christianity as a whole, or the coming kingdom of the Messiah. The new heavens and the new earth must be the same that were predicted by Isaiah (ch. 65: 17; 66: 22), which most certainly had that reference. Says Mr. Barnes, “There can be no doubt, I think, that this refers to the times of the Messiah.—It is adapted, not only to comfort the ancient afflicted people of God, but it contains most important and cheering truth in regard to the final *prevalence of true religion*, and the state of the world when the gospel shall everywhere prevail.” The city itself is identical with the temple and city seen by Ezekiel, as is apparent, not only from the general cast of it, but from the numerous minute resemblances in the two descriptions. Compare its quadrilateral shape; the three gates on each side bearing the names of the tribes of Israel; the river flowing out of the sanctuary; the vital efficacy of its waters; the

trees growing on either side; their monthly yield of fruit; their unfading leaves, with life-giving qualities; the name of the city, denoting the dwelling-place of Jehovah,¹ etc. "All," says Prof. Cowles of the former, "every several thing, provides for the great central fact, and adjusts itself around that living truth—Jehovah dwelling forever, and forever manifesting himself among his chosen; he their God, and they his people. Prophetically, it *looks down the Christian age* to its great central truth,—the Lord by his divine Spirit making his abode through all ages in the hearts of his children."

So also, the promises given to the happy inmates of the city,—tears wiped away (compare Isa. 25: 8); no more death (*ibid.*); no more sorrow nor crying (Isa. 65: 19); all things made new; (Isa. 65: 17). Surely, it ought not to be doubted that this later prophecy, evidently so minutely modeled after the earlier one, meant the same thing. It was not a servile imitation, but an embellished and emphasized repetition of it, which every reader familiar with the inspired language would recognize at once, and accept as a renewal and confirmation of the blessed assurances given therein.

3. The relations of this city to *the rest of the world* imply its co-existence with the present order of things. The nations² and their kings still remain.

¹ For the ever open gates, the bringing in of the wealth and glory of the Gentile nations and kings, the absence of sun and moon, their places being supplied by the Lord himself, etc., the pattern seems to be Is. 60: 11-19,—one of the most remarkable of the prophecies relating to the Messianic times.

² The words "of the saved," in our common version, are unwarranted, and are omitted in the Revised.

Ch. 21: 24, 26; 22: 2. It may be questioned what is the precise meaning of the "nations" here. The original—*τὰ ἔθνη*—is the well known Jewish phrase denoting the Gentiles. When standing without qualification, it almost always has that meaning. For example, see Acts 15: 3, 7, 12, 14, 17, 19, 23. Many of the ablest expositors (Ewald, deWette, Bleek, etc.), so understand it in this place. The words "in the light" of it are, properly, "through its light" (*διὰ τοῦ φωτός*) as denoting the instrument or means by which they are enabled to walk. Thus interpreted, the sentiment is the same as in Isa. 2: 2; 60: 3; viz., that the church of God should be an instructor of the Gentile nations in the truths of religion. Nor is the idea essentially different if the phrase be not confined to the Gentiles, but made of general application. Alford translates the passage, "And the nations shall walk by means of the light of it." The same thing is implied in the leaves of the tree of life being for the healing of the nations. What nations remain to be healed in heaven, or after the day of judgment? The ever open gates must denote the freeness of salvation to all who will accept the offers borne to them by the church. Is. 60: 9. The gifts brought by kings and by the nations must denote the glad homage which the world, subjected to Christ, shall offer to his cause and kingdom, which is so vividly portrayed by Isaiah. Ch. 60: 3-16.

"See barbarous nations at thy gates attend,
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend;
See thy bright altars thronged with prostrate kings,
And heaped with products of Sabwan springs!

For thee Idumæa's spicy forests blow,
And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountains glow,
See Heaven his sparkling portals wide display
And break upon thee in a flood of day!"

All this varied imagery fitly describes the perpetual office of the church to be a herald of salvation to the world (ch. 22 : 7), and to receive from it in return the grateful homage due to it and to the Lord who dwells within it.

4. It is declared that without the city are "the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie." This is usually understood of the fact that the wicked are confined in the place of punishment. It may be that such was the intended meaning, but it seems more natural to refer it to their exclusion from the church here on earth, a meaning parallel with that of Gal. 5 : 19-21. The word "without" apparently denotes the territory round about the city, and the persons named represent, as Stuart remarks, "the leading characteristics of the heathen persecutors." The figure suggests the condition of the church, under the indwelling protection of the Lord, safe within its angel-guarded walls, while its malignant and unclean foes are driven away into the outlying regions of sin and death.

But while the immediate design in the description of the New Jerusalem is to show forth the glory and felicity of the church of God on earth, when viewed as a whole, there seems also to be an inclusive reference to the further glory of its eternal reward in heaven. For the blessed kingdom of Christ includes

both worlds, the earthly as the vestibule and pledge of the heavenly.¹ The earthly would not be complete without the heavenly. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." It is the church in its perfected holiness and crowned with the hope of heavenly immortality that constitutes the city of God, the object of his delight, and the temple in which he will dwell, whose name is "the Lord is there."

Thus viewed, the inspired vision of the New Jerusalem stands before his people in all ages as their encouragement to faith and service. It bids them never be faint-hearted; never be weary either in suffering or doing. As the builder with brick or stone needs to look often at the plan of the edifice upon which he labors, that he may catch the inspiration of its symmetry and beauty, so may the Christian worker here behold the end to which all his toil and pains are directed. Christ is building his church, the capital of his kingdom. However slow the progress, whatever enmities or obstacles may hinder, it is ever going forward, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. Blessed are all they who work with their Lord in this undertaking. Blessed are they who see its glories by faith, and desire to share them. Thrice blessed they who are washing their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city.

¹ "There is
One great society alone on earth,
The noble living and the noble dead."

Wordsworth, *Prelude* Book XI.

PART III.

CHRIST AS LIFE-GIVER.

THE reign of Christ as King is over a realm *delivered from death*. The one great fact in which his whole redemptive work is founded is, that man is a fallen being. Death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Rom. 5: 12. It is not alone that they are guilty because of their transgression of God's law; it is not alone that they have forfeited his favor, and come under condemnation. The race has lost by sin the power of self-recovery. The vital impulse to holy feeling, purpose, and action, has been destroyed, and unless replaced by a divine power not inferior to that of the first creation, cannot be kindled again. Hence the oft-repeated Scripture testimony that men, in their fallen state, are *dead*,—"dead in trespasses and sins." Rom. 6: 2. Eph. 2: 1, 5. Col. 2: 13.

It was, then, one of the chief functions of the glorified and reigning Redeemer to *give life* to a world lying in death. "I am come," said he, "that they might have life." John 10: 10. He is declared emphatically to be "the Life" (John 1: 4), i. e., having in himself the concrete office and power to im-

part it to men. "As the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself" (John 5: 26), i. e., to be a new source of life to all who should receive him. And in this capacity, under numerous suggestive figures, he offers himself to mankind. "I am the bread of life." John 6: 48. "I will give my flesh for the life of the world." John 9: 51. "The water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." John 4: 14. "As the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son also quickeneth whom he will." John 5: 21, etc.

It is in this office of Life-Giver that Christ styles himself the *Ἀνδραγωγός*,—the *Resurrection*. That office must be co-extensive with the ruin which had been wrought by sin, and this included the bodies as well as souls of men. Man's whole nature, the corporeal as well as spiritual, had fallen under the power of death, and must therefore be reached by the new life which Christ came to impart. Hence that sublime declaration addressed to the weeping sisters of Bethany, and through them to all the bereaved in all time; "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth on me though he have died (*ἀποθάνῃ*—past), shall live, and he that is alive (in the flesh) and believeth on me shall never die." John 11: 25, 26.

CHAPTER I.

REGENERATION.

THE life-giving work of Christ begins in the moral nature of man, and is what we denominate *regeneration*. By the operation of the Holy Spirit on his heart, he is brought to repentance for his sins and the acceptance of Christ as his Saviour, accompanied by a self-dedication of his person, his powers, and his possessions to him forever. In this he passes through a radical change of character and state; a change so great that he is called in consequence a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5: 17). The same idea is involved in the various other terms applied to it,—a new birth, a rising from the dead, etc.

This divine work is a part of the official prerogative of Christ in his administration over men. Its formal institution we find announced in his own words to the Jews in the temple; "As the Father raiseth up the dead and giveth them life, even so the Son giveth life to whom he will.—Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." John 5: 21-24. The "dead" here mentioned are the spiritually dead, and their being raised to life is the spiritual resurrection which makes them new men in Christ Jesus. The

"voice" which they hear is the divine call in the Scriptures, in providence, in their own consciences, and in the motions of the Spirit, which convinces them of sin, and leads them to accept of Christ.¹

It is manifest that the word "hour" in this place is to be taken in an extended sense, as covering the entire duration in which the work of regeneration shall continue to be wrought on sinful souls. That work is performed upon them one by one through all the gospel ages, not upon all at the same time. The idea of it is therefore a *dispensation*, rather than a single limited period. This view of the scope of the passage is important for the light it throws upon the similar expression in the 28th verse relating to the physical resurrection. If the one is not a single period of time, but a dispensation reaching through the entire Parousia, so we may conclude is the other. Meyer remarks of the latter, "Here (verse 28) it is as little said that all shall be raised *at the same time* as in verse 25 that all the spiritually dead shall be quickened simultaneously."

¹"Of the two spheres in which the Son's power is exercised this verse (25th) has in view one only; the 'dead' are those who are spiritually dead. In regard to these alone could it be said that the hour has already begun (an hour cometh and *now is*) or would the limitation in the last words be in place, 'they that have heard shall live.'" Schaff.

To the same effect, Meyer, Alford, and others.

CHAPTER II.

THE RESURRECTION.

THE announcement by our Lord of his Messianic function of the Life-Giver, which, in its first exercise is put forth in the quickening of the spiritually dead, was immediately followed by his claim to the more august office of giving life to the physically dead. "Marvel not at this, for the hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill unto the resurrection of judgment." John 5: 28, 29.

The word resurrection, — *ἀνδραρισ*, — standing again, suggests the primary idea involved. Death nearly always occurs in a recumbent posture; man *lies down* to die. Naturally, therefore, *to stand up again* should express the idea of a restoration to life,—a second life attained after death.

SECTION I.

OF THE RESURRECTION BODY.

OUR chief source of knowledge on this recondite topic is the teaching of the Apostle in 1 Cor. 15. The church at Corinth, more or less tinctured, probably, with the prevalent skeptical philosophy of Greece, were inclined to doubt as to the whole sub-

ject, including both the resurrection of Christ and that of his people. Their difficulties, like those which have perplexed multitudes in every age, seem to have arisen from their notions of the nature of the resurrection body. The popular belief of the Jews regarded it as identical with the present body of flesh and sense, as appears from the Sadducean inquiry about the woman of the seven husbands. With such an assumption their difficulties seemed insolvable, and thinking minds among both Jews and Greeks rejected the doctrine altogether. When Paul, therefore, reaffirmed it as one of the corner stones of Christianity, it is not surprising that the perplexed inquirer turned to him with the question which involved the whole difficulty, "How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come?" In reply, the apostle in a single sentence announced the fact which formed an instant and sufficient solution; "It is sown a *psychical* body; it is raised a *spiritual* body. *If there is a psychical body, THERE IS ALSO A SPIRITUAL BODY.*"

This language, which not only teaches the true doctrine of the resurrection, but gives us the inspired terminology for its discussion, needs to be considered with great care.

The primary words from which it is derived,—*σῶμα*, *ψυχή*, and *πνεῦμα*—body, soul, and spirit,—were familiar to the philosophy of that day. Under them was included the whole science of man, as it was then understood. We need not suppose that Paul adopted all the ideas of the philosophers in making

use of the same terms to set forth the Christian doctrine; it is enough that he found these convenient for his purpose,¹ and that it is only by a careful study of them that we can gain right conceptions of his meaning.

The *psyche* (ψυχή) or *soul* is that part of man's higher nature which looks towards the earth and the animal creation. It includes those faculties and instincts which constitute the "souls" of animals, and which man has in common with them,—the senses, the passions, and the perceptive powers, so far as they relate to material and sensuous objects.

The *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) or *spirit* is that part which looks upward to God and angels. It comprises the moral sense, the discernment of right and wrong, the knowledge of God, and the capacity of loving, obeying, and serving him.

The reality and nature of these distinctions are dwelt upon by the most eminent authorities, as fundamental to a correct system of psychology. Thus President Porter of Yale College: "The term soul originally signified the principle of life or motion in a material organism. It was pre-eminently appropriated to the vital principle or force which animates the animal body, whether in man or the lower animals. Traces of this signification may be distinctly discovered in the threefold division of body, soul,

¹"The origin of the trichotomy is Platonic, but Paul has it not from the writings of Plato and his scholars, but from the current language of society, into which it had passed from the narrow circle of the schools." Lünemann, *Com. 1 Thess. 5: 23*.

and spirit, in which the soul occupies the place between the corporeal or material part, and the spiritual or noetic. This intermediate part was sometimes called the 'animal soul,' and was believed to perish with the body."¹ President Mark Hopkins, of Williams College, says: "We find three departments of force clearly distinguishable from each other, and suppose that the apostle Paul was justified as a philosopher in calling them body, soul, and spirit."² Lünemann: "*Pneuma* denotes the higher and purely spiritual side of the inner life, what is elsewhere called by Paul νοῦς (reason); *psyche* is the lower side, which comes in contact with the region of the senses."³ Ellicott: "Three component parts of the nature of man, the *pneuma*, the higher of the two united, immaterial parts, being the 'vis superior, agens, imperans in homine' (Olsh.); the *psyche*, 'vis inferior quæ agitur, movetur,' the sphere of the will and the affections, and the true center of the personality."⁴ Canon Evans: "The triple constitution of man may be roughly compared to a cathedral. The body corresponds to the nave; the spirit, to the chancel; the soul which divides and unites the body and the spirit, to the transept which divides and unites the nave and the chancel. The cathedral is one consecrated building, with three main compartments, and man is one person in three natures, all consecrated in baptism to the Triune God. Furthermore, the human spirit is the highest

¹ Human Intellect, p. 6.

² Outline Study of Man, p. 255.

³ Com. on 1 Thess. 5: 23.

⁴ ditto.

and the noblest of the three natures, and akin to the divine, and, therefore, that which is immediately controlled by the Holy Spirit, who through it acts also upon the soul, and through the soul upon the body. In like manner, the chancel is the highest and holiest compartment of the cathedral, in which also is the altar or table of the divine presence.”¹

The higher nature of man, therefore, is twofold, *soul* and *spirit*. These, by a union which philosophy cannot explain and Scripture has not revealed, are constituted *one*, which for want of a proper distinctive word is commonly called the *soul*, an unfortunate name, since it inevitably causes confusion, one part being taken for the whole, and vice versa.² In this, man seems to be unique in the works of the Creator. There are beings, as we have reason to believe, who are pure *pneumata*, the angels who stand nearest to the infinite and uncreated Spirit; and there are animal races who have only *psychæ*. Man has both, and is the link between the two.

The term body (*σῶμα*), of itself scarcely needs explanation. In the present state it is apparently a single nature, and is so treated generally in works of anatomy. Of late, however, science seems to be obtaining glimpses of a similar duality in this. But this is only reaching the same conclusion that was

¹ Com. on 1 Cor. 15: 40. See also Delitzsch, Bib. Psy.; Heard's Tripartite Nat.; Alford on 1 Thess. 5: 23; Boardman, Scripture Anthropology, Bap. Quar., 1867, p. 177.

² “To the names given there are objections, and especially to the term ‘soul,’ as having often in our times a broader meaning.” Hopkins, O. His., p. 255.

long ago affirmed as a fact, in the words of the apostle before us:—"If there is a psychical body, there is also a spiritual body." The form of expression implies that they are co-existent, making up together in the present life that one structure which we call the body, as the *psyche* and *pneuma* together make up the one subsistence which we call the soul.

The *psychical* body is, comprehensively, the *sense* body. It is the body of animals,—that which we have akin with them, and which, if we accept the new doctrine of evolution, was derived from the earth through them. It is composed of earthly elements, gases, salts, and organic principles, furnished by the soil and atmosphere. The *spiritual* body is one fitted to be the abode and the instrument of the spirit. It is, we have reason to believe, non-atomical, ethereal and indestructible. It is such a body as Paul calls "celestial" (1 Cor. 15: 40), i. e. probably, angelic. The designations and characters of the two are determined by the predominance of their respective elements. Says Meyer, "In the earthly body, the *psyche*, not the *pneuma*, is that which conditions its constitution and its qualities, so that it is framed as the organ of the *psyche*.¹ In the resurrection body the reverse is the case; the *pneuma*, for whose life activity it is the adequate organ, conditions its nature, and the *psyche* has ceased to be, as formerly,

¹ Luther's gloss is, "which eats, drinks, sleeps, digests, grows larger and smaller, begets children, etc. *Spiritual*, which may do none of these things, and nevertheless is a true body alive from the spirit." Meyer's note.

the ruling and determining element. We are not, however, on this account to assume, with Ruckert, that Paul conceived the soul (*psyche*) as not continuing to subsist for ever, a conception which would do away with the essential completeness, and thereby with the identity of the human being. On the contrary, he has conceived of the *pneuma* in the risen bodies as the absolutely dominant element to which the psychical powers and activities shall be completely subordinated."¹

In Scripture usage, therefore, man's nature, which is strictly psycho-spiritual, is named from its constituent elements, accordingly as the one or the other predominates over him. His earthly body, which ever since the fall has been under the law of the sensuous nature, has become *psychical*. The redeemed body, which in the resurrection life will be the abode and the vehicle of the glorified spirit, will be *spiritual*.

SECTION II.

OF THE ORIGIN OF THE SPIRITUAL BODY.

THIS has ever been one of the most perplexing topics pertaining to the doctrine of the resurrection. The body that is to be raised must in some way be identical with the present body, for that is essential to the idea of a resurrection; but *how*, in view of the utter dissolution wrought in the latter by death, it has been hard to determine.

There are various theories.

¹Com. on 1 Cor. 15: 44.

1. First the common or traditional one, that it is the body of the present life, *with its present organization*, the bones and flesh which were laid in the grave. This was probably the idea of the Pharisees of Christ's day. It was held by Tertullian, who wrote of the Resurrection of the Flesh,¹ under which expression it appears in the original form of the Apostles' Creed,² so called, and came down through the mediæval times to us. It is seen in the paintings of Michael Angelo, and in the writings of many of the old divines. One of the most remarkable examples of it is found in the famous poem of Dr. Young, on the Last Day.

"Now monuments prove faithful to their trust,
And render back their long-committed dust;
Now charnels rattle; scattered limbs and all
The various bones, obsequious to the call,
Self-moved advance; the neck, perhaps, to meet
The distant head; the distant head the feet.
Dreadful to view! see, through the dusky sky
Fragments of bodies in confusion fly,
To distant regions journeying, there to claim
Deserted members and complete the frame.
The severed head and trunk shall join once more,
Though realms now rise between and oceans roar;
The trumpet sound each vagrant mote shall hear,
Or fixed in earth, or if afloat in air,
Obey the signal wafted in the wind,
And not one sleeping atom lag behind.

¹ "De resurrectio carnis."—² "This clause unquestionably conveys the belief so emphatically contradicted by St. Paul (1 Cor. 15: 35, 38, 50), of the resurrection of the corporeal frame. It has been softened in the modern rendering into the "Resurrection of the Body," which, although still open to misconception, is capable of the spiritual sense of the apostle." Dean Stanley, *Chris. Institutions*, p. 295.

So swarming bees that, on a summer's day,
 In airy rings and wild meanders play,
 Charmed with the brazen sound their wanderings end,
 And gently circling, on a bough descend."

It lingers, too, in many of the hymns which are still found on the pages of our hymn books.

"God, my Redeemer, lives,
 And often (?) from the skies
 Looks down and watches all my dust
 Till he shall bid it rise."

"Rest here, blest saint, till from his throne
 The morning break and pierce the shade."

"Why should we tremble to convey
 Their bodies to the tomb?
 There the dear flesh of Jesus lay,
 And left a long perfume!"

"Oh how the resurrection's light
 Will clarify believers' sight!
 How will the waking saints arise
 And wipe the dust from off their eyes!"

We need spend no time in opposing this view. It is too gross, too foreign to the whole scope of Christianity and to all the conceptions we form of the spirit world, to be seriously entertained by any intelligent person at this day. It is directly contrary to the language of the apostle,—“Thou sowest *not* the body that shall be.” “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.”¹

¹ And yet, alas, as we go to press, we learn that a judicatory of one of our largest bodies of churches has condemned one of its members for holding “that the material body cannot be raised again,” and “that at death the soul takes with it a spiritual body;” the very doctrine affirmed by St. Paul. He saved himself from deposition only by asking and being permitted to withdraw from that denomination.

2. A somewhat less revolting theory is that which supposes that the spiritual body will be made out of *certain elements* of the present body, which will survive dissolution, and be re-collected and re-organized into a more refined structure by the fiat of the Lord at the end of the world. Much ingenuity has been expended in the endeavor to determine those elements. It is said that the Rabbins believed that the little bone at the extremity of the *os coccygis*, which they called *luz*, is indestructible and immortal, and that this is the germ of the resurrection body, and the bond of identity between it and the present body. "Pound it," they said, "furiously, on anvils, with heavy hammers of steel, burn it for ages in the fiercest furnaces, soak it for centuries in the strongest solvents, all in vain; its magic structure will remain."¹ Thomas Boston, in his "Fourfold State," held that a single particle of insensible perspiration, which has escaped from the present body during life, will be sufficient for the purpose.² But no such relics, reconstructed by a creative act, can become the body we once possessed. They are, by the supposition, without life, and inorganic, as truly as like elements produced in the chemist's laboratory. They sustain no relation to man's being except that of having been the bricks and mortar of the abode in which he temporarily sojourned. To build up a body out of these by external force, into which the soul is to be thrust for its eternal abode, would be a

¹ Heard's Trip. Nat., p. 347.

² Unseen Universe, p. 58.

process of *creation*, not resurrection. It lacks altogether that principle of continuity which is indispensable to the identity of the future being with the past.

3. A much more plausible theory has of late to some extent come into vogue, derived from the apostle's comparison with the quickened seed (1 Cor. 15: 36-38), and therefore sometimes called the "germination theory." It supposes that the act of the Holy Spirit in regeneration not only imparts the beginning of a new life in the *pneuma* of man, but also communicates the germ of a *pneumatic body*, which thereafter is nourished and trained during probation, and acquires strength to emerge at death, the glorious body of the resurrection. Thus Prof. Reuss:—"Paul more frequently places the resurrection in close and direct relation with the mystical ideas of faith and regeneration. In this aspect of it, men in whom the germ of the new spiritual life is already present and active have alone the prospect of a part in the second resurrection, which is finally to vanquish death and chase away the terrors of the tomb. *The physical resurrection of the future is inseparably linked to the spiritual resurrection of the present.* * * * If this is the adequate expression of the thought of Paul, it would be no less true to say that the resurrection is already virtually accomplished in the regeneration. The future return to life after the death which awaits us all will be only *the consequence of this first palingenesis.*"¹

¹ Hist. Ch. Theol., Vol. II., pp. 194-196.

So Prof. Shedd: "St. Paul connects the resurrection of the body with the regeneration of the soul. Soul and body constitute one human person, so that the renovation of the former naturally carries with it that of the latter. Regeneration and resurrection are two parts of one entire purpose and process of redemption."¹

An insuperable objection to this theory is found in the very inference stated by Prof. Reuss, viz., that there is a resurrection only for the regenerate. If the spiritual body originates in the renewing act of the Holy Spirit, then those only who experience that renewing act can rise from the dead. But the Scripture doctrine on this subject seems very positive. "There shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust." Acts 24: 15. "They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment." John 5: 29. Besides, the very suggestive analogy of the apostle, which, as we shall presently see, does teach the true doctrine, is thus forced to a meaning which is not rightfully in it. Germination does not *originate* a new plant, it only develops what was in it seminally from the creation of the species. There is no evidence that regeneration plants in man a new body any more than a new soul. It is not the imparting of any new elements of his being, but the quickening and regulation of those he already has, and which make him distinctively man.

¹ Com. on Rom. 8: 11.

4. We come, then, led by the true analogy of the quickened kernel of wheat, to what I submit as the Scriptural theory of the spiritual body. *It is one of the original elements of our nature, given at the creation of the race, and coming to us like the other elements by natural descent from our first parents.*

(1) For such, certainly, is the only legitimate inference from this inspired exemplar. The new shoot which springs up from the living seed is not *created*, either in the planting or the germination. It is not, ~~as~~ already observed, created in the preceding growth of the seed. Trace the line back through thousands of generations of the plant, and you find no such creative act any where till you reach the first individual of the species. Whatever pertains to the *nature* of the species, from first to last, had its origin there. Thus says Meyer, on the phrase, "God giveth it a body even as it pleased him" (1 Cor. 15: 38), "It denotes the (already *at the creation*) completed act of the divine volition as embodied in the laws of nature."

(2) And this principle may be formulated as a *universal law* of created life. Every essential part of the nature of a living thing is given it at the creation of that thing. If not at first had in full possession, yet provision is made for it, in germ or principle, so that its attainment at the appointed time follows by natural development. There is never a supplementary creative act adding to a living nature any essential element not pertaining to it from the first. The usual view of the resurrection is contrary to this rule. It regards the spiritual body then be-

stowed as a *new thing*, not wrought by a process of life, but by a direct creative act out of the cast-off exuvix of the dead body. Such an act would be an anomaly in the realm of existence. I do not, of course, say it would be impossible, but all analogy is against it. God's method, so far as disclosed to us, is invariably otherwise. We accept the fact as unquestioned that man is to have a spiritual body in the resurrection. Why should we not then make the divine method elsewhere our guide, and say that so essential a part of his perfected nature must have been given him, at least elementarily, in his creation?

(3) The same view is implied, if not formally asserted, in *the history of man's creation*. That history comes to us in a fourfold record, of which three accounts are in the Scriptures and one in natural science. For I am inclined to think that the time has come when we must receive in its main conclusions the testimony of evolution as to the physical origin of the human species, as we accept the testimony of geology and astronomy respecting the material universe. I mean, of course, *theistic* evolution, which acknowledges a personal Creator and exhibits evolution simply as the *mode* in which he works. It does not yet seem to be fully established as a science, but in its outlines it is accepted by a large body of eminent naturalists.¹ I do not believe that theology need have any fear of conceding so much, especially when, as in so many other cases, it may ulti-

¹ "One thing is clear, that the current is all running one way, and seems unlikely to run dry, and that evolutionary doctrines are profoundly affecting all natural science." Prof. Gray, *Nat. Sci. and Religion*, p. 68.

mately turn out to be an important ally of revealed truth.¹

The three Scripture records of man's creation are found in Genesis 1: 26, 27; 2: 7; and 1 Cor. 15: 45-47. The first two are parts of what are known as the "Elohistic" and "Jehovistic" narratives,² which sacred criticism now conjectures to have been among the original sources from which the Book of Genesis was constructed. The following table gives a comparative view of the four accounts:

Evolution.	Gen. 1: 27.	Gen. 2: 7.	1 Cor. 15: 45-47.
Protoplasm. Vegetation. Mollusks. Fishes. Reptiles. Birds. Beasts. Man.		The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a <i>hay nephesh</i> (living psyche).	The first man, Adam, became a living <i>psyche</i> . First, that which is <i>psychical</i> . The first man is of the earth, <i>earthy</i> . We have borne the image of the earthy.
	God created man in his own image; in the image of Elohim created he him.		The last Adam became a life-giving <i>pneuma</i> . Then that which is <i>pneumatical</i> . The second man is of heaven. We shall bear the image of the heavenly.

¹"No interest of theology prejudices me against it [evolution], for I see no conflict between such a theory within the limits of empirical science and theology; on the contrary, at various points I find it helpful in removing difficulties and elucidating and vindicating theological truth." Prof. Harris, Basis of Theism, p. 457.

"Not only does not the idea of evolution exclude the idea of final causes, it even seems, on the contrary, naturally to imply it." Janet, Final Causes, p. 218.

²So called, because in the former the divine name is simply *Elohim*, in the latter *Jehovah*, or *Jehovah Elohim*. See Lenormant's Beginnings of History, pp. 1-46.

A glance at these various representations shows their harmony with each other and with our accepted Christian doctrine. They describe two "Adams" of different origin, substance and qualities. They concur in saying that the first was formed out of the earth, evolution adding, not directly, but through a long animal ancestry; that he is earthly in his nature, having the "terrestrial" body and the "animal soul," or psyche, of the lower creation. All say or imply, also, that this was a first stage of his being which was followed by another and higher one. How long it continued Revelation does not inform us, but evolution, with its related sciences of geology, ethnography, etc., says it was many thousand years. The second and fourth narratives show the origin and nature of the second Adam. He is made in the Divine image,—a fact repeated no less than four times, as if to emphasize its importance,—a life-giving *pneuma*, proceeding directly from the infinite and uncreated *Pneuma*, the Father of all spirits. He is not out of the earth, but from heaven, with a "celestial body," like those of the angels. The third record does not mention this higher creation, though in its subsequent account of the temptation and fall it implies it, showing man as a moral being, receiving commands, disobeying, and suffering penalty, as only such a being could do. The first record is equally silent, knowing man only in his corporeal nature and history.

We see thus that there is no necessary conflict between science and the Scriptures, when strictly inter-

preted, as to the origin of man. Let the existence of the anthropoid animal, upon which in the fullness of time was to be ingrafted a higher nature, have continued never so long, through geologic periods pre-glacial and post-glacial, and successive ages of stone and iron and bronze, he was during the whole just what the apostle describes, an earthly, non-spiritual psyche animating his own psychical body. In other words, he was beast and not man; a brother, possibly more sagacious, of the elephant and horse and dog and ape; living among them and living like them, and leaving behind him no more history or works betokening an intelligent, creative mind than they. But at length we see the Creator, in council with Himself, taking that well-developed animal form, and adding to it an image of himself, a *pneuma* enshrined in its own *pneumatic body*, ethereal, celestial, incorruptible. Such a view, we say, agrees with science, and does not impinge upon any received doctrine of theology. "There is nothing," says Taylor Lewis, "monstrous or incredible in the idea that what had formerly been the residence of an irrational and groveling tenant might now be selected as the abode of a higher life, might be fitted up in a manner corresponding to its new dignity, might be made to assume an erect, heavenward position, whilst it takes on that beauty of face and form which would become the new intelligence, and indeed be one of its necessary results. A former physical growth might thus have been taken up into a new life. From an old organism there might thus have been made a

new man."¹ So Bishop Browne, in the Speaker's Commentary, remarks:—"Even if it could be made probable that man is only an improved ape,² no physiological reason can touch the question whether God did not, when the improvement reached its right point, breathe into him a living soul. This, at least, would have constituted Adam a new creature and fountain-head of a new race."³

I am aware that commentators are wont to refer the "second Adam" of 1 Cor. 15: 45, not to man's original spiritual nature, but to Christ. It does not seem to me, however, to preserve the antithesis of the passage so well as the former view. The apostle's reference of time, certainly, is to the creation as described in Gen. 2: 7, and his argument to prove that man has *two kinds of bodies*, a terrestrial and a celestial, the former of which is sown in the grave, the latter raised from it; the former *psychical*, the latter *pneumatical*. It does not bring out the two parts of the contrast to say that man's body was made out of the earth, but Christ's came from heaven. It is not, in fact, true, for his body, save in its conception, was the same as ours, a body of flesh and blood. Still, if the application of the passage to him is insisted on, it will scarcely forbid a typical reference to our first parent also, whose spiritual nature was the antitype of Him who was *Man* par em-

¹ *Six Days of Creation*, pp. 248, 249.

² "Sober evolutionists do not suppose that man has descended from monkeys. The stream must have branched too early for that." Prof. Gray, *Sci. and Rel.*, p. 101.

³ *Com. on Genesis*.

inence, the Divine Head and Representative of our race.

If this conclusion, then, be accepted, man has the immortal spiritual body by nature, as truly as the immortal pneuma which it enshrines.¹ It is one of the essential elements of his being which constitutes him man. His subsequent moral history, whether in probation or retribution, whether in this world or the next, will not impart any new elements to that being. When God looked upon his finished work on the morning of creation, and pronounced it good, he entered into his eternal Sabbath.

(4). We reach the same conclusion from the fact that man as created was *immortal*. I am well aware that this is denied by many, in respect both to the soul and the body, especially by those who hold to the final annihilation of the wicked. But the very threatening which God uttered against him, that if he ate the forbidden fruit he should die, necessarily carried the promise also that if he obeyed he should not die. In other words, he was *immortal* while *obedient*. It does not mean that he had of his own nature eternal life, but that the Creator who made him in his image gave him the godlike boon of immortal-

¹ "Illud corpus quod in constitutione hominis primitus est factus spirituale ac immortale crediderim esse, ac tale aut ipsum quale post resurrectionem habituri sumus." (That body which was at first in the constitution of man, I should believe to be spiritual and immortal, and either like, or the very same as, that which we shall have at the resurrection). John Scotus Erigena, "the most learned doctor and extraordinary thinker of his time." Am. Cyclopædia. Quoted in Delitzsch Bib. Psy., p. 155.

ity.¹ And immortality necessarily implies spirituality. Says President Dwight, "The body, like the mind, was originally incapable of decomposition or decay. All material substances are universally collections of innumerable atoms, and therefore become, whenever the bond which unites them is destroyed, subjects of dissolution. Nothing more is necessary to the destruction of the material form than the mere separation of its parts. The soul, being perfectly simple, is incapable of suffering this process, and cannot perish but by annihilation."² The converse of this argument must be equally true, that an immortal body cannot have an atomic basis, but must be ethereal and spiritual, which is precisely what we predicate of the glorified body of the resurrection.

(5). I think we may cite to the same effect that curious and in many ways suggestive statement re-

¹ The old logicians made a vital distinction between inherent immortality, which they called *non posse mori*, and a bestowed immortality, *posse non mori*. The former is that which God alone possesses; the latter that which he gave to man. As Dörner finely remarks: "Man's immortality stands fast upon the fact of the possession of the image of God, i. e., in the last relation, on God. The true conception of God places the worth of man and of personality so high, and God's will of love for communion with man so firm, that immortality has therein its pledge. On account of his essential relation to God man has the infinite destination and ordination not to die, which comes through God for believers to its full realization of eternal life. But also the relation of the wicked to God is a relation of infinite importance, such as nature has not." *Fut. State*, edited by Smyth, p. 44.

² *Sermons*, Vol. I., p. 345.

specting our first parents, that "they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were *not ashamed*." What the full meaning of this affirmation is we do not know; taken, however, with the subsequent statement, that after the transgression "their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked," it must hint at a purity and dignity of the body radically unlike the present sense body. It cannot, of course, mean a non-sexual body, nor one to which the office of parentage was to be unknown, for the command had already been given to be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. In this respect, we concede, it differed from the spiritual body of the resurrection, but the difference, we suspect, was rather one of function than of nature. Certain we may be, that in that primitive structure all passions were in the most perfect poise. The whole being was dominated by the spirit, as it was interpenetrated by the spirit; and this is only saying that it was itself *pneumatical*, as it will be when it becomes *ἰσάγγελος*,—"equal unto the angels." Luke 22: 36.

"So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight
Of God or angel, for they thought no ill." Par. Lost.

(6). Indeed, the entire description of the condition of our first parents before the fall suggests that they were *spiritual beings in a spiritual state*, differing essentially from what they and their descendants were afterward. I do not pretend to assert it as a fact, but am willing that it shall be regarded as a mere speculation. The story of the Garden of Eden, and of what took place there, has ever been felt to

present enigmas not easily solved. Its location has never been satisfactorily determined, and the best geographers seem to have reached the conclusion that no place now exists corresponding to the Biblical description. The "tree of life" and the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" can hardly have been of any species belonging to our earthly flora. The animal tribes brought thither to be named could not have included the destructive and repulsive ones, whose presence would have been unfitting to Paradise; neither could they all have *come* in any manner consistent with their present natures. The interview of the serpent with Eve would have been simply impossible to any species of the existing ophidia, even though possessed by a fallen spirit. Man himself,—at first without sex, subsisting and acting for some time as the dresser of the garden, the namer of the animals and lord of creation, and then miraculously losing a rib of which a woman was formed—could not have been man as we know him and as we are. Many commentators, therefore, despairing of a literal interpretation of the history, have resorted to allegory and symbolism to explain it, but with indifferent success. Instead of these, let the suggestion be allowed that the whole took place *in a spiritual sphere*. They were realities, that is, they were representations, the best possible in our earthly language, of facts occurring in that sphere, but they did not pertain to a condition of sense.

Does it not confirm this conclusion respecting the primitive Eden, that the state of final glory and

blessedness for the church is described in the New Testament as another *Paradise*? The word came into this use among the Jews, and was sanctioned by our Lord in his promise to the penitent thief, and by Paul in describing the wonderful revelations which had been granted him.¹ As seen in the vision of the Apocalyptist, we can not resist the belief that he had his eye upon this scene of man's first felicity. It is *Eden restored*. There is the same guarded seclusion, the unclean and injurious and beastly shut out. There are the perennial waters of life that adorn and refresh the garden. There are the beautiful trees that yield food and grateful shade, and the "trees of life" whose leaves are for healing. There are the "good" gold and gems,—the pearl² and the onyx-stone. From that holy abode the tempter "that loveth and maketh a lie" is forever excluded. There God again walks and dwells with men, and wipes away all the tears caused by the fall; and there death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more; *the first things are passed away*. And there shall be *no curse* any more, and the throne of God and the Lamb shall be therein, and they shall reign for ever and ever. It is Paradise made new, only with attractions a thousand times greater.³ And as the lat-

¹ Luke 23: 43; 2 Cor. 12: 4.

² "Of the many opinions respecting the true import of the original Hebrew (*bdellium*), the most probable is that it stands for *pearl*." Prof. Bush.

³ "The resurrection body is the perfect completion of the beginning constituted in the original body." Delitzsch, *Bib. Psy.*, p. 155, note.

ter is not a scene in the world of sense and time, so neither was the former. Both indeed are the abodes of men, the former in the primitive, the latter in the restored, dignity of their spiritual nature,—the one lost by sin, the other regained by grace in the resurrection.

SECTION III.

OF THE ORIGIN OF THE PSYCHICAL BODY.

I have spoken of the readiness of many of our best Christian writers to concede the claims of evolution as to the remote origin of the human material body. Scripture says it was made out of the dust of the ground, and evolution adds that it was through a long line of ascent from the common source of all life, animal and vegetable. There is no necessary contradiction in this. But evolution does not tell us how this superiorly developed animal came to be possessed of a higher nature infinitely surpassing anything enjoyed by the other animal races,—a being endowed with the moral sense, a rational, self-conscious spirit. It can tell us nothing of the origin or history of that higher nature, before it was made the resident of an animal abode. For aught it can say or discover, that nature may have had an existence of any conceivable duration, and a moral history such as pertains to spirits only, of which no record is left in the earth's strata. On that topic it belongs to Revelation alone to speak. And if we read it aright, Revelation has spoken in a manner not wholly devoid, indeed, of mystery and

difficulty, but probably with as much clearness as the nature of the subject admits of, and to such effect as affords us the only satisfactory light we have on the known facts of man's condition. That testimony is the story of *the Temptation and Fall*.

The details of that event, which took place, as I venture to believe, in a spiritual sphere, are related in a mode adapted to our present sense conceptions. The physical consequences of the transgression were, 1. Exclusion from the garden. 2. Sentence to dwell in an earth accursed for their sake, bearing thorns and yielding food only to severe labor. 3. The subjection of woman to her husband, and to the pains of motherhood. 4. The enmity of the serpent and its race. 5. Corporeal death, and a return to the dust.

Here then, I beg leave to suggest, we are furnished the point of coalescence between the two convergent records of science and revelation. Man, the child of God, the immortal *pneuma*, dwelling in his own immortal pneumatical body, had sinned. For the double purpose of punishment and, as I shall show hereafter, of recovery from sin, he was to be *deposed* from his previous dignity, and condemned to a lower sphere, and to an experience therein of another sort than was natural to a pure spirit. Accordingly, upon foresight of this emergency, the earth, through a vast series of changes and developments, both inanimate and animate, had been by Infinite wisdom made ready for this supreme occasion. Its highest form of animal existence, having an earthborn *soma*

and a living *psyche*, was taken, and to this, by a creative act, was conjoined the fallen *pneuma* with its ethereal body, so making MAN, the first of the present human race, then first properly named *Adam*, the "man of the ground."

I submit this as hypothesis only, not yet as doctrine. But if it may be borne with as an hypothesis for a little time, let it be noted how exactly it will correspond with the recorded facts, and how perfectly harmonize the demands of both science and revelation.

Such a degradation of man's spiritual nature would be his *removal from the garden*. All that was meant by the scenery, the fruits, and the employments of that fair abode, would fade forever from the dull eyes of sense. The vision of God walking there and communing with them, and of the celestial visitants¹ who often granted them their sweet society, would be possible to them no longer. That perpetual supply of all spiritual wants, symbolized by the spontaneous growth of everything that was "pleasant to the sight and good for food," would henceforth cease. Existence within the narrow bounds and the chilling clime of sense would be Paradise no longer.

He would become an inhabitant of *this material earth*, with its thorns and its barrenness, a world which, compared with the garden he was compelled to leave, might well be called "cursed." To be

1 "Nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though spirits of heaven,
To visit thee." Par. Lost, Book V.

doomed to this, in the picturesque language of the narrative, would be equivalent to having a curse pronounced upon his abode.

The special *subjection of woman* and the sorrows of maternity would be the natural consequences of her coming into the common experience of the animal races, where the female, usually having the feebler and more delicate organization, is forced to submit to the rule that might gives law.

The *enmity* destined henceforth to exist between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent may be typical of the warfare exercised by all the noxious tribes against him and against each other; the serpent standing as the representative of all those tribes because it had been the instrument in his temptation and ruin.¹

And finally his entrance into a decaying and mortal body would involve his subjection to *death*. The earth is a world of death, and all its piled-up strata are the sepulchers of countless races. Become a brother to these in his nature, he was doomed to share with them in their common destiny. The very fact of becoming psychical instead of spiritual, was an instant subjection to the reign of mortality, and a fulfillment of the sentence, "In the day thou eatest, thou shalt surely die."

The correspondences of the hypothesis with the narrative I submit are perfect. At the same time it

¹I do not mean to exclude a prophetic reference in this to the final victory over Satan by Christ, the divine seed of the woman. I am speaking now only of the immediate physical effects of the fall upon the race.

harmonizes with a great many other facts, both scientific and scriptural.

Geology, including Evolution, cannot refute it, for it concedes all they ask respecting the origin and antiquity of the body. They may bring forward their ancient skulls and the whole mass of pre-historic relics, and we will not dispute whatever they may reasonably claim for them. At the same time it may enable them to explain why, from the immeasurable ages of fossil man, they can show none of the proper works of rational and spiritual man. These, at furthest, go back no more than a few thousand years, just where the Scriptures apparently place his beginning in Genesis. Both sides of the mysterious problem of man's antiquity are thus solved, his vast duration as a brute, his recent origin as a being of thought and reason.

On the other hand are conserved all the great doctrines which have hitherto been recognized as fundamental to Christianity. The Fall can no longer be charged with being a myth, but is a veritable fact of human history. The doctrine of original sin, cleared of its erroneous psychology and applications, is reclaimed for that place in theology to which Paul assigns it. The subjection to vanity under which man, in common with the whole creation, is groaning, becomes an intelligible philosophical fact. The perplexing problems of human degradation and suffering, and of all those arrangements which impart discipline to a fallen race, are solved.

Need we hesitate, then, to accept as truth what is

put forth only as an hypothesis, but which apparently fits so perfectly into the arch of these ancient and dim mysteries of the beginnings of man and the world?

SECTION IV.

OF THE PRESENT PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL STATE.

If such, then, was the origin of the spiritual body,—that which is to be the subject of the resurrection; if it has come down to us like the rest of our nature from the creation, and is a relic of the endowment given to man in his primitive state, then it must be inferred that *man now has it in possession*, at least as an elementary subsistence. The body as well as the soul must have a dual nature, an exterior material body of sense, and an interior etherial body of subtler essence appropriately denominated the “spiritual body.” It is proposed now to inquire how far this conclusion has commended itself to our best authorities, both in theology and science.

“Adam begat a son in his own image, after his likeness.” Gen. 5: 3. If, then, he retained after the fall the essential elements of his nature, we may regard it as certain that he transmitted them to his descendants. They were in a disordered condition; they had been brought into bondage and debasement, but they still existed. The pneuma had come under the control of the psyche; the *soma* had become a *sarx*, whose impulse (*φρόνημα*), as Paul said, is “not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”¹

¹ See the essay on this subject by Dr. Gifford in the *Speaker's Com.* on Romans, p. 48.

And yet man remained truly *man*. The trichotomy of his original nature continued, spirit, soul, and body, the latter itself also twofold, like the twofold origin whence it came.

One of the ablest discussions of the doctrine of the resurrection in modern times is given in the Bampton Lectures for 1850, by Dean Goulbourn. His view of the origin of the spiritual body is somewhat different from the above, but it agrees with this so far as to regard it as coeval in its origin with man's creation, and as already existing in its elements within the present body. Its germ he finds in the substratum of matter itself, the clay or dust out of which the fleshly body was made. "If it be asked," he says, "how we define the term *body* when we predicate of it resurrection, the answer is, that the body which shall be raised is some elementary material basis, not apprehensible by our present faculties, which lies at the root of those superficial phenomena exhibited by all matter, and by the human body which is matter organized in a particular form. Now it is the essential basis, not the present organization of the human body, of which the Scriptures affirm that it shall be raised again in incorruption. That we cannot with our present limited powers seize this essential basis,—that its constituent particles escape the apprehension of our most subtle senses when the body is resolved into its component elements, and that we are unable, even when the body is alive, to penetrate beneath its superficial phenomena to these constituent particles, is no argu-

ment whatever against their existence. In truth, we know nothing of the real essence of any substance with which we come in contact. He only who formed them knows what is their true constitutive essence. His eye, and his alone, can penetrate beneath the phenomena of continued flux, which all matter exhibits on its surface, to the real basis of the various substances of the material world. When to the eyes of man every component particle which once entered into the constitution of a substance is dissipated far and wide, there may still remain of it in his eyes something which was the very germ of its existence, and which involves its future organization."

The fault we have to find with this is, that that substratum, whatever it be,—of that we know nothing—is still *matter*, like the composite clay itself. Now the analogy of a seed teaches us that a new plant must be of *the same nature* with the germ. Spirit and matter we have reason to believe essentially distinct. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." A spiritual body cannot be conceived of as originating from matter. Still the discussion by the learned Dean is able and very valuable, especially as setting forth so clearly the truth of the *present existence*, in its essential elements, at least, of the resurrection body.

Heard, the author of "The Tripartite Nature of Man," grounds his conception of the nature of the resurrection body on "the distinction between sentient and nutritive life"; i. e., between "organs of

the excito-motor class by which intelligence is served and the connection of mind with body kept up," and those employed in maintaining the bodily life, including reproduction. In a higher state of being, "in which there shall be no unruly wills or affections, it is supposable that the excito-motor system may be restored to us without these lower nutritive organs." These different states or stages of being he likens to the metamorphoses which take place in insects, where the larva, the pupa, and the imago correspond to the natural body, the disembodied soul, and the spiritual body in man. Referring to the researches of Bonnet, a distinguished French entomologist, who in 1767 published a work entitled "*Palingenisie Philosophique*," he says: "Bonnet's theory that within our material system there lurks an exquisite spiritual organization, invisibly pervading it and constituting its vital power, seems to be the first conception of the nature of the spiritual body which is at once philosophical and Christian. Death might be the stage during which the spiritual body rose out of the animal, as the imago develops itself from the larva under the winding-sheet of the cocoon. Bichat's and Bell's generalizations have come since to illustrate still further what was a simple analogy or anticipation of reason in Bonnet's hands. We now know, as he did not, how much of our present organization is spiritual and what is animal only. The nervous system or organic life, though at present indivisible from the flesh or nutritive life, is clearly distinguishable in idea, and will be one day distinguishable in fact, as

‘the butterfly is from the grub.’” His conclusion, then, is: “Instead of the old carnal conception of the resurrection of relics, which has come down through the school-men from the fathers, and which the Council of Trent has indorsed in its catechism, we hold the resurrection of the spiritual body in man, *which is at present embedded in the flesh, and inseparable from it*, but which shall be recalled from the grave at the last day.”

Heard quotes also Leo Grindon as saying: “The body of flesh and blood is only half the human body. Another body underlies it. ‘There is a natural body,’ the apostle says, ‘and there is a spiritual,’ and by this he plainly means a body altogether different from the natural, which is the material, or as Wiclif calls it ‘the beestlie bodie.’ Yet by speaking of both in the present tense, saying of each that it now is, he gives us to understand that *the two bodies are contemporaneous and co-existent*, so long, that is, as the natural one may endure. By adding that it is to be raised he intimates that this spiritual body is the immortal part of our being. Hence the writer goes on to argue that the resurrection occurs in each case at the moment of death. Life and its Nature, p. 146.”

So Professor Laidlaw of Scotland: “If we have watched how the body even here puts on a likeness and correspondence to the real man,¹ to the life

¹ “We are spirits clad in veils;
Man by man was never seen;
All our deep communing fails
To remove the shadowy screen.”

C. P. Cranch.

within, it will not be difficult to think that for the ripening Christian his future body is being prepared by the Spirit of Christ *dwelling already in this mortal frame* and quickening within it that which is to live forever." p. 260.

One of the most thoughtful English writers of half a century ago was Isaac Taylor, author of the "Physical Theory of Another Life." In this he paraphrases the language of Paul in 1 Cor. 15, thus: "His interrogatories and his replies may be reduced to these: Have the dead ceased to exist? Have those who are fallen asleep perished? No, for *there is a spiritual body*, another vehicle of human nature, as well as a natural body, and therefore the dissolution of this animal structure leaves the life untouched. The animal body is not itself the life, nor is it the cause of life; nor again is the spiritual body the life nor the cause of it; but the one as well as the other, are the instruments of the mind, and the necessary medium of every specific and productive exercise of its faculties." p. 23.

It is in this connection, as a necessary prerequisite of that continuity of nature which alone makes a resurrection and even a future state possible, that the present existence of the spiritual body is most frequently affirmed. President Porter, of Yale College, says, "That the soul begins to exist as a vital force does not require that it should always exist as such a force, or in connection with a material body. Should it require another such body or medium of activity, it may have the power to create it for itself,

as it has formed the one which it first inhabited ; or *it may already have formed it in the germ*, and hold it ready for occupation and use as soon as it sloughs off the one which connects it with the earth. These possibilities permit the only theory of the soul's continued existence in another state which is consistent with the facts of our present being."¹

Professors Stewart and Tait, the authors of the "Unseen Universe," speak with great explicitness on this subject. "We maintain that we are logically constrained to admit the existence of some frame or organ which is not of this earth, and which survives dissolution, if we regard the principle of continuity and the doctrine of a future state as both true. Besides, the analogy of Paul, in which the body of the believer at death is compared to a seed put into the ground, not only implies some sort of continuity, but also expresses his belief in *a present spiritual body*. 'There is,' says the apostle (observe, not there shall be) 'a spiritual body.' Again, the same apostle tells us (2 Cor. 5: 1), that 'if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we *have* a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." p. 203.

The opinion thus expressed as to the present existence of the spiritual body seems to have been derived as an inference from certain other facts asserted of our nature. But we are not now obliged to rest it here. Science itself appears to be claiming it as a fact within its domain. Thus the last named

¹Human Intellect, p. 39.

writers, in what they put forth as a scientific discussion, introduce an objector who asks, "If there be, as you say, this duality in the present human frame, how can the spiritual part remain latent so long as it does? Even if trammelled by the grosser substance, we might expect that at least on rare occasions it should somehow manifest itself?" To this they reply, "It is possible that there have been, and that there are, *occasional manifestations of this spiritual nature.*" pp. 207, 208,

This scientific fact as to man's inner nature is dwelt upon at length by Mr. Joseph Cook in his lectures upon Biology. He describes the discoveries which have been made in the arcana of life by the aid of the microscope, and claims that it has been made certain that the soul even here dwells in an ethereal and spiritual body. He says:

"It is Ulrici's view that the soul is the occupant of a non-atomic ether, that fills the whole form and lies behind the mysterious weaving of the tissues.

"This non-atomic fluid is absolutely continuous with itself.

"Its chief center of force is in the brain.

"But it extends outward from that center, and permeates the whole atomic structure of the body.

"The soul, as an occupant of this ethereal ensowathment, operates in part unconsciously, and in part consciously.

"It co-operates with the vital force.

"It is not identical with that force.

"It is the morphological agent which weaves all

living tissues. It spins nerves. It weaves the muscles, the tendons, the eye, the brain. It arranges each part in harmony with all the other parts of the organism.

"So far as the ethereal enswathement of the soul is non-atomic, it is immaterial.

"This non-atomic, ethereal enswathement of the soul is conceivably separable from the body.

"It becomes clear, therefore, that even in that state of existence which succeeds death, the soul may have a *spiritual body*.

"The existence of that body preserves the memories acquired during life in the flesh.

"If this ethereal, non-atomic enswathement of the soul be interpreted to mean what the Scriptures mean by a spiritual body in distinction from a natural body, there is entire harmony between the latest results of science and the inspired doctrine of the resurrection."

These conclusions are not, according to Mr. Cook, mere theories, or as President Porter terms them, possibilities, but demonstrated facts of science. "We are following," says he, "haughty axiomatic certainty. In clear and cool precision, science comes to the idea of a spiritual body. We must not forget that this conclusion is proclaimed in the name of philosophy of the severest sort. The verdict is scientific; it happens also, to be biblical. Is it the worse for that?

"In every leaf on the summer boughs there is a network which may be dissolved out of the verdant

portion, and yet retain as a ghost the shape which it gave the leaf from which it came. In every human form growing as a leaf on the tree Igdrasil, we know that network lies within network. Each web of organs, if taken separately, would have a form like that of man. There might be placed by itself the muscular portion of the human form, or the osseous portion, or the veins, or the arteries, and each would show the human shape. If the nerves could be dissolved out and held up here, they would be a white form coincident everywhere with the mysterious human physical outline. But the invisible nervous force is more ethereal than this ghost of nerves. The fluid in which the nervous waves occur is finer than the nervous filaments. What if it could be separated from its environment and held up here? It could not be seen; it could not be touched. The hand might be passed through it; the eyes of men in their present state would detect no trace of it; but it would be there.

“Your Ultricis, your Lotzes, your Beales, adhere unflinchingly to the scientific method. The self-evident axiom that every change must have an adequate cause, requires us to hold that there exists behind the nerves a non-atomic ethereal enswathement for the soul, which death dissolves out from all complex contact with mere flesh, and which death thus unfettering without disembodiment, leaves free before God for all the development with which God can inspire it.”¹

¹In adducing the testimony of science to the present existence of the “spiritual body,” it may be thought that some ref-

SECTION V.

THE SPIRITUAL BODY SUBJECTED IN HOPE.

What, then; was the purpose of this remarkable arrangement of the Creator in respect to his sinning children?

Punishment there doubtless was, for law must have its penalty in a righteous government. But we believe there was more than punishment,—a grand remedial scheme, in short, for the rescue of them and their posterity from the consequences of sin and a restoration to a more than primitive felicity.

It can scarcely have escaped the notice of thoughtful minds, that of the two classes of spiritual beings existing in the universe, who according to revelation have fallen into sin, one only has been chosen unto

erence should be made to the phenomena of what is called "spiritualism," as offering confirmatory evidence to the same effect. Those phenomena, making large allowance for imposture and illusion, I should not be disposed to deny. The testimony of thousands of eye-witnesses, of unimpeachable veracity, establishes beyond a doubt that there is a residuum of fact under these manifestations, which can be best explained by the presence within the human body of an occult, invisible, ethereal force, which, in special circumstances, reveals itself to the senses and produces abnormal and marvelous effects. If the existence of a spiritual body, like that described by Mr. Cook, be ascertained from independent sources, or if it be merely assumed as an hypothesis, it will certainly harmonize with those observed facts. But the whole subject is still so undetermined, and there is such a mass of deception and falsehood connected with it, that it can as yet scarcely be referred to in proof of anything. The most which it seems to me can be said at present is, that the phenomena referred to point in the same direction with those described in the text.

salvation. For one only, so far as we have reason to believe, has any provision of salvation been made. And that is the one which has been granted a new probation in circumstances which to a purely spiritual being must seem strange and wonderful, in a gross, material body, in a material world. Such a condition in itself must be repellant to its instincts, a bondage to its spiritual activities, and a source of experiences, both joyous and painful, utterly foreign to its proper nature. How much of the mystery of human life arises from this fact,—the inexplicable mixture of good and evil appointed for every human being in this checkered scene of sense and time!

We venture to suggest a solution of it in the facts of man's creation and fall, as heretofore recited. His deposition from a simple spiritual experience, and his union with a material and sense nature with its limitations and experiences, was *a remedial measure*, by means of which the consequences of the fall might, to a degree, be arrested, and a new system of influences and appliances employed for his recovery. Is not this, in its profoundest meaning, what Paul designed to teach in that strangely suggestive passage in Rom. 8: 18–25? “The sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the creation—of which man was made a part—was subjected¹ to vanity (a state of weakness, suffering and death), not of its own will, but by reason of Him who sub-

¹ “In consequence of the fall.” Meyer.

jected it,¹ in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. And not only so, but ourselves also (Christians) who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, *the redemption of our body.*" The subjection to vanity was made *in order to* that deliverance; it was a subjection *in hope of it*; in consequence of which we wait, expecting while groaning, the glorious result, the redemption of our body by the resurrection.

1. The promise of such redemption was obscurely given at the very time of the subjugation, in *the sentence pronounced upon the Tempter*, "The Seed of the woman shall bruise thy head." We know as neither they nor he did the fullness of its meaning. The presence and work of the Incarnate Son in his Parousia are but the history of its fulfillment.

2. It was repeated in a more impressive form in the stationing of *the cherubim* at the gate of the lost Paradise. It is usually assumed that these mysterious beings were symbols of God's displeasure, designed to make the sentence of exclusion from his favor final and irreversible. I cannot think that this assumption is altogether true. Doubtless it meant that the dreadful sentence of death was unalterable; no access to the tree of life must be permitted to change this. But, surely, it was not the purpose of the merciful Father to preclude hope.

¹ "The counsel and will of the subjecting God." Meyer.

The tree of life was not to be cut down, nor cease to have healing and strength for the needy. True, they must go out into the world, and work and suffer and lay their dying bodies in its dust, but life still, a higher life than they had had before, should be attainable. This should be *kept for them*; a way to it, in God's time and mode, should be kept open for them. And so these grand and mysterious guardians were set by the open, not shut, gate to signify to them both present exclusion and future readmission.

Something like this general idea seems to me indispensable to harmonize the mention of these beings here and in subsequent passages. In Ex. 25: 18-22, and Num. 7: 89, they are placed as golden figures on the mercy seat of the ark, where, certainly, the leading idea is not exclusion from the divine presence and favor, but attraction to them for the penitent. "I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from *between the two cherubim* which are upon the ark of the testimony." In like manner, the curtains of the tabernacle and the vail which divided the holy from the most holy place displayed the same figures embroidered in cunning work, as if to surround the worshipers who drew near to Jehovah with tokens of his accessibility. In the temple of Solomon, the "oracle," or Holy of holies, was adorned with two colossal cherubim, ten cubits high, and the walls and doors with cherubim and palm trees and flowers,—symbols, most assuredly, not of implacable displeasure, but of mercy and grace. And whenever, in time of distress, God's

help was invoked in prayer for his people, it was this mode of manifestation which was wont to be pleaded as a ground of encouragement. "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock, thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth." Compare Num. 7: 89; 1 Sam. 4: 4; 2 Sam. 6: 2; 2 Kings 19: 15; Ps. 99: 1; Isa. 37: 16. We cannot doubt that this symbol, which meant so much for the worshipers under the Mosaic dispensation, was derived from the cherubim of Eden. The very word translated "he placed" (*yashken*, "he caused to dwell," Gen. 3: 24), is the same in its root that was so often used of the tabernacle and the mercy seat, *the shekinah*, or dwelling place. Instead, then, of being stern executioners of vengeance, they were the pledge of mercy; the first preachers of the gospel of recovery; of God's willingness to receive back to his favor those who had lost the first Eden by transgression. In this view, this mysterious symbol might well become the token of salvation to all after ages; might be enshrined on the mercy-seat and hung all about the sacred precincts of the sanctuary; might interpret the sublime presence of Jehovah as it appeared to Ezekiel at the river of Chebar (Ezek. 10: 20); and finally, might reappear in the vision of John, standing about the throne of God, and leading the songs of the elders in the hymn of redemption completed.¹

¹ Since the above was written, I have been much gratified at finding an ample confirmation of this view in Lenormant's "Beginnings of History." He shows that among the traditions of the Creation and the Fall, preserved so generally in the

3. A careful consideration of *the world itself* which became the abode of fallen man, shows that it was designed in its very structure and furnishing to

records of the earliest nations, this of the cherubim is quite conspicuous. The discoveries of Layard among the ruins of Nineveh have made us familiar with the huge winged, human headed bulls, lions, and other animal figures, which were stationed at the entrances of the palace, or adorned the interior walls. These represented the *guardian genii* of the place, and are called in the inscriptions the *kirubi*. "With the Chaldeo-Assyrians, from the 10th to the 5th century before our era, the *kirûb* whose name is identical with the Hebrew *kerûb* (cherub), was the winged bull with the human head." p. 126. Indeed, he says, "The word *kerub* is of pure Semitic origin, and has been used as a substantive to signify 'bull,' in the sense of a creature 'strong and powerful' beyond others, from a root, *kârab*." p. 120.

These symbolic beings were not placed in their positions to prohibit entrance there, but to *keep* that entrance for its owner, and drive away intruders and enemies. "The winged bull with a human head-figuring as a bas-relief of the palace of Khorsabad (is) a *favorable and protecting genius*, which watches over the safe navigation of the transports that carry the wood of Lebanon by sea." In one inscription the king, in describing the workmanship of his palace, says, "I have furnished the gateways with genii, with stone colossi, which, like the beings they represent, overwhelm (with fear) the breast of the wicked, *protecting the footsteps*, conducting to their accomplishment the steps of the king who made them." The forms of these beings differed; sometimes they were lions instead of bulls, sometimes human bodies with animal heads, sometimes more complicated groupings of various beasts, among which, however, the head of the bull or calf was most frequent.

The "flaming sword turning every way" is found also in the same inscriptions. It is not shown as a sword *in the hands* of the cherubim, but as the mysterious circle or "wheel" accompanying the figures of the divinities. Compare the "wheels" described by Ezekiel. Their office seems to have been the same as that of the cherubim, to *protect the entrance* of the palace.

be a world of hope. The subject is too extensive to be adequately exhibited here; a few suggestions are all that is now possible.¹

The transgressors were removed from the garden and the ground cursed for their sake. I have before interpreted this as signifying their deposition from that spiritual state in which they were created, and their incarnation in psychical, animal bodies, in which they were consigned to this material world, to enter upon a new probation. It was a world specially adapted to such a use, rugged, changing, abounding in elements fitted to afford both joy and sorrow, and already through a vast preceding history a theater of pain and death. The complex composition of his being in this state serves in various ways to restrain sin, mitigate its malignity, and render him susceptible to both good and evil,—the last fact opening all that wide and varied experience by which moral discipline is effected. New avenues in the same way are opened into his heart, through which direct influences may be exerted to restrain, to soften, and to win to repentance. This complex nature lays a foundation for the family institution, for the peculiar state of infancy with all its possibilities in the way of moral impression and training, for relationships of blood and affinity and society, for earthly affections, conjugal, parental, filial, and fraternal. Even the consciousness that the present life is a transient one; that our condition is one of subjection to vanity in

¹ See a very able and suggestive article in the *Quarterly Christian Spectator*, Vol. X. p. 105, on Rom. 8: 19-23.

hope of deliverance, a probation on whose results the destinies of eternity depend, tends in every serious mind to lift the aspirations heavenward and seek the re-attainment of happiness set before us. Every pain we feel, every scene of suffering we behold, reminds us of our fallen humanity. Every time, especially, we look upon that last, most humiliating, spectacle that can ever meet the human eye, the sinking of the poor psychical body, in its bondage of corruption, into the grave, we are made to feel through all our being what sin is and has done, and long more and more for the deliverance which Christ alone can give us through the resurrection into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

4. It is a most distinguishing feature of this present state of man, that it has been dignified by *the coming into it of the Incarnate Son of God*. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." There is a depth of meaning in this language not commonly appreciated. It is not merely that the Logos became man, a partaker of human nature. It is not that he assumed a *σῶμα*, a body like ours. He became *σάρξ*, *flesh*, a fallen and psychical body. Observe, it is not said that he became *σαρκικός*, *carnal*, which would mean that he was personally sinful (compare 1 Cor. 3: 1). He came *into* the corruption without becoming himself corrupt. In him was life, and he came into the flesh, which by reason of sin was dead, that he might kindle in it life anew. To as many as received him thus, he gave the privilege (*ἐξουσίαν*) of becoming sons of God, who are born, not of blood,

nor of the will of the flesh (*σὰρξ*) nor of the will of man, but of God.

This office of the incarnation, to bring a new life into fallen human nature, is little spoken of in our modern theology, but it was a foremost doctrine of primitive Christianity. The apostle builds upon it the entire hope of the resurrection in his Epistle to the Corinthians. He makes Christ a second head of the race, co-ordinate with, but infinitely superior to, Adam, the first head. "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." The form of the antithesis shows that its two parts must be taken with equal reach of meaning. In Adam all men incurred a psychical nature, in which they became mortal; in Christ all shall recover a pneumatical nature, in which they will be immortal. That is, death and resurrection are co-equal, each proceeding from its parental head. But though co-ordinate, the two heads are not equal. Adam, as the original record reads, was so made, in his earthly body, as to become simply a *living psyche*, Christ in his incarnation became a *life-giving Pneuma*. Neither are they alike in origin or affinities. The first man was made out of the earth, and is therefore earthy; the second man came from heaven, and is heavenly. And as we bore the likeness of the one, in our mortality, so shall we bear the likeness of the other in our immortality.

It is, then, the entrance of the Son of God into our fallen nature that has made this life of ours in the flesh a dispensation of hope. "Emphatic," says

Canon Evans, "are the words *bore* and *bear*; they both point to external appearance; the second denotes the manifestation of the sons of God in spiritual bodies at the resurrection. If the word *image* is borrowed from coinage, the sense of the whole will be: The substance or material of the old humanity is *even in this life* in process of being secretly transmuted and refined by a 'celestial fire,' and recast in a heavenly mold; in the resurrection the new metal will be restamped with the new image. Now, indeed, we carry in the animal body, the unmistakable copy of our earth-born original, but hereafter we shall bear in the spiritual body the indelible impress and character of our Divine Archetype." Speaker's Com. 1 Cor. 15: 49.

5. Further; the present world has been distinguished not only by the incarnation of our Lord, but by the appointment, after the withdrawal of his bodily presence at the ascension, of the Holy Spirit, to be his representative and the executor of his divine purpose of salvation for men. "He shall glorify me, for he shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you." It is thus that Christ performs the first part of his great office as Life-giver, in quickening the spiritually dead. Regeneration by the Spirit, as we have before shown, is a moral resurrection, instituted as a dispensation even while he was still in the flesh, and is a token and pledge of the corporeal resurrection that should succeed.

Surveying, thus, the present state and constitution of man, we see that though a fallen state, it is one of

hope. The spiritual body is neither destroyed nor left helpless in its bondage. There are windows in its prison through which comes the light of heaven. Voices of cheer are wafted through the air from Eden and Calvary and the Pentecost. Even the pain and suffering it here endures have messages of encouragement, for they tell of a discipline that wounds to heal, that bruises to make alive. So, while even we who have the first fruits of the Spirit do groan within ourselves under the sorrows of this state of vanity, we may still comfort ourselves that it is as the redeemed children of God, and amid them all wait patiently for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

SECTION VI.

DEATH.

When the purposes of the present state have been accomplished in such measure as seems best to Him who appointed and has watched over it, it is terminated by DEATH. The psychical body falls into dissolution, and returns to the earth from which it sprung. The spiritual body is released from its bondage, and regains its original and native freedom. But not as it came into bondage does it depart. Its life-work was wrought here ; the business of probation transacted, and it now emerges bearing with it the products of this most momentous period. The disorder in its immortal occupant has been healed, the pneuma and the psyche have come into harmony, in the glad and confirmed submission of the latter to

its rightful superior, through which both have also come into harmony with the Lord of souls. Or that disorder has itself become confirmed and perpetual, and the moral nature fixed in subjection to evil. In either case there is no longer any reason for further continuance. The redeemed soul, with the new scion of holiness grafted and grounded in vigorous life, is ready for transplantation to the recovered Paradise; or now become wholly and hopelessly psychical, is fit only for removal from probation to the place of the castaway and the lost.

And here may be an appropriate place to remark that the view of the present life thus given shows the extreme improbability that another, a second, probation will ever be granted after it. Most surely such another theater of opportunity, fitted up with such abundant advantages, sanctified by the coming into it of the Son of God, and furnished with such innumerable channels of saving influences, will never be constructed for the purpose. Even if there should be, there is not the slightest probability that it would avail for the purpose. There could never be a more merciful world than this, which, instead of delivering a sinner at once to punishment, suspends the execution and puts him upon a most gracious trial for his recovery, making his very prison a house of delights, surrounding him with all conceivable attractions to goodness, waiting for him patiently scores of years, and plying him all the while with the double discipline of joy and sorrow, of reward and chastisement, of fear and hope. If this fails, what promise could

another give? another, which by the supposition must receive those who in addition to their original sinfulness had added thereto all the strength and persistency and obduracy resulting from defeating this? Accordingly, there is no promise or hint of such a second probation in the Scriptures, but the ultimate destiny of all men is made to depend upon the products of this life. "We must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may receive *the things done in the body*, according to what he hath done, whether good or bad." 2 Cor. 5: 11.

The spiritual body, then, is at death emancipated from the bondage of earth, and with the spirit that inhabits it, enters upon the after life. It is the common belief that this is a *disembodied* state,—that the soul or spiritual part exists there entirely separate from any corporeal nature, and will so continue until the supposed distant period of the resurrection. This opinion I believe to be erroneous, for the following reasons:

1. There is *no evidence* of its truth. It is a pure assumption derived from the appearance presented to our senses. The fact that the soul lays aside a perishable, psychical body does not prove that it lays aside *all* body. If we trusted to sense alone, we should conclude that the whole man ceases to exist, soul as well as body.

2. The assumption destroys the very foundation of the doctrine of a *resurrection*. If there is no corporeal nature which survives death, then nothing can rise. God might create a new body to succeed that

which was laid in the grave, but that creation would not be the raising of the old one. Resurrection necessarily implies the *sameness* of the two, and this requires *continuity*.

3. There is no reason to believe that a soul separated from a bodily organization can maintain a *conscious existence*. It certainly can have neither force nor consciousness here unless such connection be preserved, and that in a healthful condition. Say the authors of the "Unseen Universe," "One of the essential requisites of continued existence of the individual is the capability of retaining some sort of hold upon the past; and inasmuch as we are *unable to contemplate* such a thing as a finite disembodied spirit, or to speak more precisely an unconditioned finite spirit, it is further evident that this hold implies an organ of some sort."—"He must possess an *organization* in which there is the power of calling internal forces into play at irregular intervals dependent on his will." (p. 78). Prof. Harris states the same thing potentially. "It is possible that spirit acts in and through a material organization * * The finite spirit, as a subcreative center of reason and free power, may weave for itself a material vesture of ethereal texture and from fitly elaborated matter, through which it acts and by which it is revealed. * * * If it should be found that all finite spirit in the universe is in some way connected with some form of matter, the fact would not conflict with the fact of its existence," etc. * * "Matter is not the bound and prison of the spirit, but rather gives

occasion and excitement, instruments and resources, place and scope for its action and development."¹ Prof. Westcott regards Christ's resurrection, which proves that "the soul does not remain alone in a future state, but is still united with our body, that is, with an organism which in a new sphere expresses the law which our present body now expresses in this," as evidence of our own possible continued existence and personality.² Pres. Porter, as we have seen, says it "permits the only theory of the soul's continued existence in another state which is consistent with the facts of our present being."³ Isaac Taylor says: "We may with some degree of confidence regard a corporeal state as indispensable to the exercise of active faculties, to a scheme of government, and to a social economy."⁴ See his entire chapter on the "Conditions of Corporeity whether Animal or Spiritual," in which he argues that "the idea of corporeal existence * * is the basis of intellectual activity, of moral agency, and of communion or sociality among intelligent orders."

The same doctrine is taught at great length by Cudworth, in the fifth chapter of his "Intellectual System." He says: "Human souls, when by death they are divested of these gross earthly bodies, do not then live and act completely without the conjunction of any body, and so continue till the resurrection or day of judgment, this being a privilege

¹ Phil. Basis of Theism, pp. 412, 437.

² Gospel of the Res., p. 155.

³ Human Intellect, p. 39.

⁴ Physical Theory, p. 28.

which not so much as the angels themselves, and therefore no created finite being, is capable of; the imperfection of whose nature necessarily requires the conjunction of some body with them to make them up complete, without which it is inconceivable how they should have either sense or imagination."¹ He shows that this was the view of the Fathers, and even to some extent of the philosophers. "The most ancient assertors of the incorporeity and immortality of the human soul suppose it notwithstanding to be always conjoined with a body."² The agreement of the best and most religious philosophers was "that the most consummate happiness and highest perfection that human nature is capable of, consisteth not in a separate state of souls stripped naked from all body and having no manner of converse with matter."³ He quotes Irenæus, Origen, Tertullian, and Augustine to the same effect, demonstrating that the common idea of our own day, as to a state of disembodied existence after death, is as contrary to the conceptions of the early Christian theology as it is to the teachings of the Scriptures.

It should be remarked here, however, that many of these ancient writers, as not a few modern ones, in the strait between the ideas of a disembodied existence and a distant resurrection, resorted to the curious theory that man has during that intermediate state a *provisional body*, which is not the actual body of the resurrection, but an *ad interim* substitute for it. Cudworth thus describes it: "It is not at all to

¹ Vol. II. p. 26.

² p. 229.

³ p. 23.

be doubted but that Irenæus, Origen, and those other ancients who entertained that opinion of souls being clothed after death with a certain thin and subtile body, suspected it not the least inconsistent with that of the future resurrection; as it is no way inconsistent for one who hath only *a shirt or waistcoat* on to put on *a suit of clothes or exterior upper garment*; which will also seem the less strange if it be considered that even here in this life our body is, as it were, twofold, exterior and interior, we having beside the grossly tangible bulk of our outward body, the soul's immediate instrument, both of sense and motion, which latter is not put into the grave with the other, nor imprisoned under the cold sods." p. 246.

A similar speculation is presented us by Delitzsch, and other German writers. "We believe," he says, "that the spirits of the departed are even in themselves not without a phenomenal bodily form. 'The soul of the spirit,' we say with Goschel, 'after the separation from its body, is not wholly without a body—the inward body follows it.' As the soul is a principle of bodily life derived from the spirit, it is even in itself probable that although immaterial, it is still a manifestation of the spirit, formed conformably to the organism which it enlivens by its universal presence. This is an old view."¹ He quotes Umbreit as saying, "There remains to souls after the flesh has passed from them, a certain corporeity not further described." Heyder: "*Animæ in Hade ver-santi umbra corporis vindicatur.*" Kastner: "Per-

¹ Bib. Psych., pp. 502, 503.

haps there is a certain portion of matter constantly associated with our soul, and the rest no further than to form the clothing for the body which we call ours." Dorner: "The passage, 2 Cor. 5: 3, says, 'We long to be clothed upon with the heavenly body (verses 1 and 2), although after putting off the earth body, we shall not be found naked.' If we may so read and understand the passage (which certainly is disputed), then some sort of an immediate corporeity, having secondary importance in comparison with the divinely-given resurrection body, may be thought of."¹ Schöberlein: "The soul which is separated in the Lord will after death be supported and surrounded by the internal spiritual corporeity which it has worked out here below in the silent hidden way of faith through the power of the Holy Spirit." He quotes also the Purgatory of Dante, canto XXV. where the soul after death is represented as forming a vehicle for itself out of the air:

"The ambient air
Weareth that form which influence of the soul
Imprints on it, and like the flame that, where
The fire moves, thither follows; so henceforth
The new form on the spirit follows still:
Hence hath it semblance and is shadow called
With each sense even to the sight endued.
Hence speech is ours, hence laughter, tears and sighs."

The only evidence which Delitzsch gives in support of this fanciful notion consists in the appearance of Samuel to Saul, of Moses and Elijah on the mount of Transfiguration, and the parable of the rich man

¹ *Fut. State*, pp. 109, 110 (note).

and Lazarus. Perhaps I should add his citation of the "white robes" from Rev. 3: 4, 5; 6: 11; 7: 9, 13; 19: 14. Compare 3: 18; 4: 4, the mention of which so frequently and continually makes it "exegetically impossible to regard this white raiment as a mere figure of speech."

But while we admit that these and similar passages to be adduced presently may teach the existence of *some* bodily investiture of the soul after death, it is altogether gratuitous to say this is a merely provisional or phenomenal body, and not the true body of the resurrection. Of the real existence of the latter we are sure; of that of the former we know nothing. Why resort to a mere figment of fancy to explain what is very much better done by the not doubtful teachings of revelation?

4. If we deny the reality of a corporeal organism for the soul after death, I see not how we can escape the dreary alternative of supposing it to sink into a state of unconsciousness, or what is called *the sleep of the soul*. If it is dependent upon the body, as that which gives it "occasion and excitement, instruments, and resources, place and scope for its action and development," then when the body dies, it must lose all these and pass into a condition differing in no way perceptibly from annihilation.

I am aware that many men of eminence, and even some entire denominations of Christians, have accepted this as an article of their faith. To my own mind, scarcely any thing could be more shocking. Have all the past generations of men perished in this

abyss of nothingness? Have none of the race of Adam, Enoch and Elijah alone excepted, reached heaven? Is there no better hope for ourselves beyond this life than that of slumbering till the unknown and distant era of the resurrection in the dreamless sleep of the grave?

I will not undertake to refute in form what Calvin calls this "crazy idea" (*deliramentum*). I leave that to what has already been adduced, and what will appear as we proceed. It is sufficient to say that this seems but the logical outcome of the materialistic theories involved in the traditionary views of the resurrection. With such conceptions of our nature and destiny, we turn away from the gospel of immortality and grope back into the darkness of an age unenlightened by revelation, and cry out piteously with Job, "Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?"

5. We apply then, finally, to the teachings of the Scriptures.

First, we note that the glimpses they give us of the departed, as just adverted to, always show them in corporeal forms, and with the recognized features they had had on earth. Samuel, when he appeared and spoke to the wayward king Saul, and Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration were not like the "pithless shades" of Orcus, which had forms only, not substance. In the latter case we know that Christ was present in his real though transfigured body, and the whole impression conveyed by the scene is that these glorified saints were in a con-

dition corresponding to his. *Something*, certainly, presented itself to the senses of the observers. If it was not the true body of the immortal life, what was it? To call it, as Delitzsch does, a "phenomenal" body, is to rest in a name without an idea.

The description given by our Lord of persons in Hades, in the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, is not that of disembodied spirits. I would not press too closely the costume of the scene,—the torment by flame, the burning tongue, the finger tip dripping with water, the great gulf, etc.; all which imply materiality and corporeity. Christ used language in accordance with the usage of the Jews at that time, who always conceived of the departed and of the abode whither they had gone as having form and substance. Of what we call naked or pure spirit they had no idea whatever.¹

Hence the explanation which many of our best commentators give of 1 Cor. 15: 40. "There are *"celestial bodies."* The usual assumption is that, by these the apostle means the sun, moon and stars, the *"heavenly bodies"* in an astronomical sense. But such a sense is entirely incongruous to the argument,

¹Says Dean Goulbourn, "The inspired writers *view man in his totality* as the draught of him exists in the Divine mind. And therefore resurrection is the only aspect under which man's future state presents itself to them. The mind of the Jews was formed upon their Scriptures, and did not come in contact with the Gentile mind. Therefore, they would view the future state of man exclusively under the aspect of corporeal resurrection;"—i. e., never that of a disembodied spirit, but as having always and inseparably that corporeal nature without which he could not be conceived of as man.

which aimed to show an objector that, though bodies of flesh and blood did not rise, there might yet be a resurrection, because there are celestial as well as earthly bodies. Certainly the existence of the stars is no proof that human bodies will rise; and, besides, the apostle knew nothing of any heavenly bodies in our modern sense. I cannot doubt, therefore, that reference was intended to the bodies of angels. So Meyer, de Wette, Alford, Stanley, Godet, and many others. Dr. Poor, the translator of Kling's Com. on 1 Cor., adopts this view. "All the accounts given of the angels imply the possession of a material vehicle more subtile and glorious than that of man, capable of visibility or invisibility at the option of the spirit within." When our Lord, therefore, told the Sadducees that the departed are "as the angels," or "equal to the angels," how certainly must they have understood him to mean that they have bodies like theirs. Not those which, as in this life lay the foundation of marriage and these earthly relations, but divested of animal passion, ethereal, celestial, spiritual. Could they have supposed he meant disembodied spirits, of which they had never heard, and of whose subjective state they could have formed no conception?

But nowhere, perhaps, is the fact before us more clearly set forth than in that remarkable passage, 2 Cor. 4: 14—5: 10. The Apostle is speaking of the consolations which sustained him under his present trials, and which were not only "an eternal weight of glory," but were near at hand, an object within the constant view of faith. Then, using the familiar

figure of a dwelling, he represents it as all ready to supersede the present. "If our earthly tent-house (*σκήνος*) have been dissolved, we have an edifice (*οικοδομήν*) of God, not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens," i. e., as contrasted with the earthly abode, one whose proper sphere is in heaven. What language could more finely describe the divinely formed, ethereal, incorruptible, celestial, spiritual body of the saints than this? This body, he says, *we have*; it is even now in existence and ready for occupation. Alford remarks, "The present is used of the time at which the dissolution shall have taken place." "He who has died," says Meyer, "*has from the moment of the state of death being set in*, instead of the destroyed body, the body proceeding from God."¹ I do not see how it is possible for words to contradict more emphatically the common belief that the resurrection body is not formed or given till some far distant period of the future. The designation of time is most explicit; it is *when the earthly body dies*. And as this is not with all men simultaneous, but occurring one by one through all the ages, so must the formation of their resurrection bodies be.

It is in this certain assurance, the Apostle says, that we bear present sorrow. "We groan, longing to be clothed upon (a mixed figure combining the thought of a house and of a garment) with our habitation which is from heaven, since indeed (our version

¹ For those who die before the Parousia, Meyer adds, "Not yet, indeed, as a real possession, but as an ideal possession, undoubtedly to be realized at the (near) Parousia."

reads, "if so be that," which is scarcely intelligible)¹ being clothed, we shall not be found naked." "The sense," says Alford, "is this: For I do assert again that we shall in that day prove to be clothed with a body, and *not disembodied spirits*."

He then proceeds, taking up anew the Christian's longing: "For, indeed, we that are in this tent-house do groan, being burdened with its pains; not that we would be unclothed (i. e., without a body), but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life." We would have our new celestial abode, like a garment, *put on over* the old one, so that there may be *no break or interval* between them, but that the mortal in the one may be swallowed up by the higher nature of the immortal. Indeed, he adds, to this very result, viz., the unbroken continuity of a sheltering *home* for the soul, God wrought us when he made us his sons, the earnest of which we already enjoy in the gift of his Spirit.

Can anything be in greater contrast with this magnificent assurance of the immediate occupancy of the God-given celestial body than our heathenish idea that the believer goes out into eternity *naked*, and remains there naked for unknown ages! Are Paul, notwithstanding, and all the saints of the Lord who from generation to generation have been gathered unto him, only *ghosts*, stripped, unclad, unhoused, like the pale shades that wander on the banks of

¹ The revised Greek text has *εἴτε* instead of *ἐάντε*, expressing the idea of *certainty*, not of mere possibility. This reading is approved by nearly all the best authorities.

the Styx? Is it not time that our Christian theology, in its conceptions of that waiting glory of which he wrote so exultingly, should take Paul himself for its teacher, rather than Homer or Plato?¹

SECTION VII.

OF HADES.

The full import of death to the minds of the ancients is not perceived without taking into view also the state of the departed immediately after death. It was personified as a king having a realm of the dead over which he reigned with irresistible power. To die was not only to leave this life, but *to be dead*, within his domain and subject to his inexorable sway.

That realm was called by the Jews *Sheol*, a word generally supposed to be from a root signifying to *ask* or *demand*, referring to its incessant calls for victims. This was represented in the Septuagint by *Hades*, an ancient word for the place of the dead, signifying the *invisible*, and this name it retains in

¹The loss which Christianity has suffered in consequence of this error cannot be measured. The dying hour of believers has been darkened by the thought of the *emptiness* of disembodiment, and sorrowing hearts have been wrung because it was impossible to form a rational idea of the state of their loved ones, of their occupations, of ever meeting them again, or even of knowing them. The only possible escape from this distress has been our *practical disbelief* of the supposed fact. Nobody does or can conceive of a spirit without the attributes of a body. It must have form and dimensions and place, or we cannot think of it. What our traditional teachings have denied, our instinct, by the necessity of our nature, has reaffirmed, and this it is which has saved us from the darkness of despair, or the deeper darkness of total unbelief.

the Greek of the New Testament. Its location was supposed to be under the earth (Gen. 43: 38; Num. 16: 30, 33; Job 7: 9; Ps. 63: 9; Ezek. 31: 15, 16, 17; Matt. 11: 23; 12: 40; Luke 10: 15; Eph. 4: 9). It was very deep (Job 11: 8), dark (Job 10: 21, 22), having valleys or depths of various gradations (Ps. 86: 13; Prov. 9: 18), and as already remarked, all devouring (Prov. 1: 12), insatiable (Prov. 30: 16; Isa. 5: 14), and inexorable (Cant. 8: 7).

Hades was the receptacle of all the dead irrespective of character (Ps. 89: 48; Prov. 21: 16; Isa. 38: 18, 19). The pious Jacob looked to it as the end of life (Gen. 37: 35), and Job (17: 13, 16), and David (Ps. 16: 10; Acts 2: 27, 31; Ps. 30: 3), and Hezekiah (Isa. 38: 10), and our Lord himself (Matt. 12: 40). The wicked also went there (Job 24: 19; Ps. 9: 17; 31: 17; Prov. 5: 5; 9: 18; Is. 57: 9; Luke 16: 23).

The views which are given of the condition of the departed in Hades vary considerably in the earlier and later books of the Scriptures. In the former, it seems to differ little from extinction. Job in his anguish sighed for it as a place of sleep and rest. "I should have lain still and been quiet; I should have slept; then had I been at rest with kings and counselors of the earth, which built desolate places (tombs) for themselves, or as a hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light. There the wicked cease from troubling and the weary be at rest; there the prisoners rest to-

gether; they hear not the voice of the oppressor; the small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master." It was "a land of darkness and the shade of death, a land of darkness as darkness itself, and of the shade of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness." Hezekiah deprecated it as a place in which it was impossible to know and praise God. "For Sheol cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth; the living, the living shall praise thee." The author of the Book of Ecclesiastes is yet more emphatic. "The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything; neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love and their hatred and their envy is now perished. There is no work nor device nor knowledge nor wisdom in Sheol, whither thou goest."

In the progress of time this conception of universal slumber in unconsciousness began to develop dim ideas of retribution. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death." After the return from the Babylonian captivity, these ideas grow more and more distinct. In the second book of Maccabees are frequent references to a blessed futurity to be attained by those who suffered for their religion. "Our brethren," said a noble son, after his six brothers had been put to death, "who now have suffered a short pain, are dead under God's covenant of everlasting life," to which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews

probably refers, "Women received their dead by a resurrection, and others were tortured not accepting their deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." Ch. 11 : 35.

At length in our Saviour's time the doctrine of reward and punishment in Hades was fully developed. We find it in Philo and Josephus and the Talmud, and especially in Christ's parable of the rich man and Lazarus. "Paradise" and "Abraham's bosom" denoted that part where were the abodes of the righteous; "Gehenna" and "Tartarus," the lake of fire where were wicked men and angels.

Unutterably sad, then, was the prospect of death even to the good man before the light of the gospel was given. Every soul, whether righteous or wicked, must descend into Hades. There was no discharge in that war. It was, at best, a world of gloom. As death had come upon man as the fruit and penalty of sin, so the entire realm of death was, in some sense, under divine wrath. Compare Ps. 90. In the vivid personification of prophecy, Hades was a mighty conqueror, the monarch of an innumerable people. When Isaiah predicts the utter destruction of the king of Babylon, he represents this tyrant of the underworld coming up to receive him. "Sheol from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become as weak as we? art thou become like one of us?"

Isa. 14: 9, 10. And in the Revelation, the opening of the fourth seal disclosed "a pale horse, and he that sat on him whose name was Death; and Hades," i. e., all the multitudes of the dead as a vast military array, "followed with him."

But with the development of the retributive character of Hades was disclosed also the fact of its temporary duration. It was not to be the *final* home of man. At first the truth was but dimly made known,—the fact itself, but not the time nor mode of its termination. One of the earliest utterances to this effect was in the words of David, whose superior spiritual intuitions seem to reveal an almost New Testament light. "My flesh shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol, nor suffer thy holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life.—I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Ps. 16: 10. In Isaiah 25: 8, the idea is presented, in connection with judgments upon Israel's enemies, of a *Deliverer* who will "swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces," which although seeming rather as a figure to signify national restoration than a literal personal return of the dead to life, tended at least to make the idea of a resurrection familiar. So in Hosea 13: 14, the same thought is expressed in language so forcible that it is even referred to by the Apostle in his exultant chapter on the resurrection: "I will ransom them from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be thy plagues; O Sheol, I will be thy destruction." Ezekiel

predicts the restoration of his people under the vision of a valley of dry bones reanimated by the breath of the Almighty; and Daniel (12: 2) closes his magnificent promises of victory under the prowess of Michael, the great Prince of Israel, with that first clear announcement of the resurrection of the martyrs: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Finally, under the teachings of the Rabbis, and of the N. T., this doctrine took more definite shape. When the Messiah should come he would raise the dead and administer judgment to all. The righteous should ascend with him to heaven, and the wicked be cast into the fire of Gehenna. Till then souls in Hades were in a state of waiting. It was called a *prison* (*φυλακή*, 1 Pet. 3: 19), a place of detention, a world of hope for those who had faith in God and in the Messiah, a world of fear to those who could then only expect to receive the ultimate punishment for their sins. To these views, for substance, our Lord gave the confirmation of his own authority. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus shows us the actual condition of the departed as they *then* were; his declaration to Martha affirms his office to be the Resurrection and the Life; not only to raise the dead, but that henceforth the believer should never die; while the apostle asserts that his mission was to destroy death, to abolish Hades, and to a world which had long lain under the dominion of this last great enemy, bring life and immortality to light.

SECTION VIII.

OF THE RESURRECTION PROPER.

In that supreme hour of most intimate and tender communion, in the upper room of the last supper, our Lord for the first time disclosed to his disciples something of the future blessed state of his people. Heretofore he had spoken mostly of their duties and trials on earth, and only in the most general terms of the rewards that should follow. But he is now about to leave them. The sad fact is announced, and the gathering shadows of the mysterious tragedy and the dreadful bereavement, already fall heavily upon their hearts. We cannot wonder, as we remember what Hades was to the mind of the Jew, at their overwhelming sorrow. No vision of a believer's triumph over death had then cheered the last hour. No psalm or song of heaven and its glories had been heard in the temple courts or been recorded on the pages of the Scriptures. We look in vain in the Old Testament for any intimation of the righteous passing from this life to heaven, or any utterance of that hope which is full of immortality. It was then a new truth, transcending all they had ever conceived of, when, instead of the dark under-world whither all past generations had gone, Christ pointed his sorrowing friends upward to the glorious dwelling-place of God. "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. *I go to prepare a place for you.* And if I go and prepare a place for

you I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

I. THE PREPARED PLACE.

It is in *his Father's house*. The Jews were familiar with the thought that the dwelling-place of Jehovah was in heaven. Job 22: 12. "Is not God in the height of heaven?" Isa. 66: 1. "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne and the earth my footstool." Ps. 113: 4. "The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens." Ps. 123: 1. "Unto thee do I lift up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens." 1 Kings 8: 30. "Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place." Matt. 5: 34. "Swear not by heaven, for it is God's throne," etc. No greater contrast is possible than that which is thus suggested between the old and the new, between the depths under the earth, and the heights above the firmament.

The "many mansions" are probably a figure derived from the numerous chambers or lodging places constructed on the exterior of the sanctuary, for the accommodation of the priests during their periods of service, according to their courses. Josephus very quaintly describes them thus: "Now about the sides of the lower part of the temple, there were *little houses*, with passages out of one into another; there were a great many of them, and they were of three stories high (i. e., as we understand, three tiers of them); there were also entrances on each side into them from the gate of the temple. But the superior

part of the temple had no such little houses any farther, because the temple was there narrower, and forty cubits higher, and of a smaller body than the lower parts of it.¹

In the Talmud the description is: "Side chambers six cubits broad, fifteen on the north, fifteen on the south, and eight on the west, in all thirty-eight, in three stories; the lowest entered from below the upper ranges, from spiral stairways in the north end of the portico; and by the same contrivance from the lower story; ten cubits above the roof of the chambers was a row of lights, narrow without and broad within."²

To the mind of a devout Jew an abode in one of these chambers was the highest possible dignity and joy. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord, my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee." Ps. 84: 1-4. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple." Ps. 27: 4.

Now the temple and its courts were regarded as the earthly symbol of heaven,—the holy places made with hands, the figures of the true. So these *monai*

¹ War. 5. 5. 5.

² Barclay, *City of Great King*, p. 268. A similar arrangement had existed in Solomon's temple also. 1 Kings 6: 5, 6. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 8. 3. 2.

of the sanctuary would be most expressive types of the abode of Christ's people in the heavenly temple. That temple after his ascension was to be his own dwelling-place, in which he should reign as King and High Priest, and they enshrined in these sacred apartments would be *with him* to behold his glory, to perform the exalted service of a holy priesthood, and to go no more out forever. The entire conception and imagery of the promise are taken from the Hebrew sanctuary, the highest and holiest known to man.

What the preparation was that Christ was to make among these mansions for the reception of his people, we do not fully know. Two things, however, are certain; he was to enter there himself *in his risen state*, and so fit it to be a resurrection world. It was not to be a place of disembodied spirits. He himself would not be there as such a spirit, but in that glorious body which is the exemplar and the pledge of the glorified bodies of his saints. Secondly, he was to bring into it all the pious dead who in the preceding ages had been waiting in Sheol for his coming. Though the promise was new and transcending all that the ancient saints had conceived of, yet they were not to be deprived of participation in it. They had all died in faith, not having received the promise, but having seen it afar off and embraced it by faith, though required to wait for the better thing prepared for us, that they apart from us should not be made perfect. Heb. 11: 13, 40.

2. CHRIST'S DEATH AND DESCENT TO HADES.

The first step in the preparation announced was his own death and entrance into the world of the dead. "Since the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is the devil."

The death of Christ involved his descent into the place of the dead, i.e., Hades. "To-day," said he to the penitent thief, "shalt thou be with me in Paradise." This was the Paradise of the underworld, not that of the third heaven to which Paul was caught up. 2 Cor. 12: 4. On the first day of his resurrection he expressly assured Mary Magdalene that he had not yet ascended. John 20: 17. Peter, in his Pentecost sermon, quoted David's hope of deliverance, and says that he uttered it prophetically of Christ, "that he was not left in Hades." See also Matt. 12: 40; Eph. 4: 9; 1 Peter 3: 19. Indeed, the doctrine of Christ's descent to Hades was one of the fundamental truths of the primitive faith, as is seen in the article of the Apostle's Creed, "He descended into Hell."

The precise purpose of that descent is one of those mysteries which are but dimly revealed, and in respect to which there are great differences of opinion. The most noted passage referring to it is the one above mentioned; 1 Pet. 3: 18, 19. I need not recite all the opinions which have been recorded of this passage, much less does it become me to advance my own. After long and careful study of it,

I can see nothing more satisfactory than the explanation given by Huther, Alford, Fronmüller, and the great majority of commentators, ancient and modern, that our Lord at his death did go in person into the world of the dead, and make proclamation there of his work of redemption, especially to those who before the flood had refused to obey the warnings of Noah, and perished in the waters. Were it not for the supposed bearings of this passage on the subject of a probation and acceptance of the gospel after death, it is probable that such a rendering would never have been questioned. But we may, and I submit should, accept all that is positively taught without adopting remote and doubtful inferences. The fact of such descent seems certain, and of his preaching or proclaiming there (*ἐκφύρουσιν*), a word elsewhere used specifically to denote the announcement of gospel truth. The antediluvians who were destroyed by water seem to have been suggested by the contrasted salvation through the water of baptism (verse 20). More than this is unknown. Why Christ preached to them distinctively, and what effect was produced by it, are matters of which nothing is said, and nothing, therefore, may be inferred.

The announcement of his completed work of redemption in that world, would, if nothing more, be the proclamation of the approaching deliverance of those that had been detained there waiting for that event. It would make known the impending establishment of the new kingdom of heaven, in which

he should reign in his promised glory. Of that kingdom the saints of the older dispensation were to be fellow-citizens with those of the later. In the fullness of time the hour had come when prophecy should be fulfilled, the eyes of those who had so long looked and longed for the coming glory should be gratified, the great scene of the Resurrection should take place. Death, the last enemy, should be destroyed, and the reign of eternal life and eternal joy be begun.¹

3. CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

In 1 Cor. 15: 23, 24, the process of the resurrection is represented as subdivided into two stages, of which Christ's own resurrection and ascension is one. "Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Of the fact of Christ's resurrection little need here be said. The apostle rightly makes it the very corner stone of Christianity, and the proof of it is as abundant and conclusive as such a truth requires. One of the latest and ablest summaries of that proof is given us in a work published, "from a lawyer's standpoint," by Judge C. R. Morrison of New Hampshire.

It is a question of much interest that has been largely discussed, what was the nature of Christ's resurrection body. Was it the natural body which he had possessed during his lifetime now restored

¹ See an article by Tayler Lewis in *Bib. Sacra*, Vol. VI., p. 486, seq.

to life, or was it the spiritual body in which he ascended to heaven? In behalf of the former it is urged that it is the obvious inference from the narrative; that the tomb was found empty; that his body, as he shewed it to Thomas and the eleven disciples, retained the wound of the spear and the prints of the nails; that he repeatedly ate and drank with his disciples, was handled by them, and appealed to their senses in proof that his body, having flesh and bones, was not a spirit. On the other hand, reference is made to the fact that he was not recognized by Mary or the disciples; that when they saw him they were affrighted and thought they saw a spirit; that he entered a room with closed doors, and vanished from sight, and the like. The question is important, chiefly for the light it is supposed to throw upon the nature of our own resurrection bodies, which it is declared shall be made like his. But even if we concede, as seems to me most natural, that it was his material body, it by no means follows that our resurrection bodies will be material also. He is indeed to be our pattern, but this does not imply an exact history like his. We die as he did, but not necessarily on the cross. We rise from the dead, but not on the third day. There were important purposes to be effected by his resurrection, which will not be by ours; and the proofs of the fact have an importance which does not attach to ours. It was necessary that the fact itself should be established by the direct testimony of eye witnesses, which could be done only as he was recognized in

his resurrection body as the one whom they had known in the flesh. "We are thrown back," says Dean Goulbourn, "on the simple and satisfactory hypothesis that, for the purpose of certifying to his disciples the fact of his resurrection, Christ miraculously reassumed the old natural body as the only mode by which he could reach their present senses, —reconstructed, if I may so say, the flower into the seed for a time, in order that the seed might be shown to live after the power of an endless life." p. 163.

Christ's resurrection was a victory over Death. He who had been the resistless tyrant over all the living of earth yielded to a power that was greater than his. Nor was the victory for himself alone; it was for all that race of whom by his incarnation he had become the second Head. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Accordingly, when he appeared to the Apostle in Patmos, he declared himself as "the Living One." "I was dead and behold I am alive forevermore, and *I have the keys of Death and Hades.*" Rev. 1: 18. When he himself rose from the dead, he burst the bars which had made it the prison (*φυλακή*) of waiting souls, he opened its doors and carried away the keys, thus fulfilling his own words to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the Life."

4. THE DEAD IN CHRIST.

The opening of Hades and the deliverance of the pious dead is the second stage (*τάγμα*) of the great

transaction. "Then they that are Christ's at his coming." 1 Cor. 15: 23. There are three different phrases by which those here meant are designated. In 1 Cor. 15: 23, it is "they that are Christ's." In 1 Thess. 4: 14, "them that are fallen asleep in Jesus," and in verse 16, "the dead in Christ." The primary reference, undoubtedly, is to departed Christians. The apostle had preached to the Thessalonians the near approach of the Parousia with all the blessed hopes connected therewith, so that it was an object of the liveliest expectation among that people. But some of the believers meanwhile had died, and it became a question of deep anxiety with the survivors as to whether these would have any share in the expected glories. To meet this anxiety, Paul expressly says that those who should be alive at the Parousia should not precede those who slept. For as Christ himself had died and risen again, so God would bring those that slept in Jesus—(Ellicott translates "those laid to sleep through Jesus") with him. It is very clear that in this case departed Christians only are referred to.

By parity of reason, however, I cannot doubt that all the pious dead of the former dispensation are included in the same promise. For these all belonged to Christ. Though they had not known him in the flesh, yet they had seen him in the types appointed to represent him, and had accepted him "by faith." "Abraham," said Christ, "rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." The fathers, in the wilderness, "drank of the Spiritual Rock, which was

Christ." 1 Cor. 10: 42. And collectively of the saints of the former age, it is said, "These *all* died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar."

All those, therefore, who through faith in Jesus were sleeping in hope, should attain their completed resurrection at his Parousia. Let us note the recorded steps of that great transaction.

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4: 16. In the parallel passage in 1 Cor. 15: 52, only one of these particulars is mentioned,—“at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound.” I cannot doubt that this is the same thing that is described by Christ himself in Matt. 24: 30. “They shall see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet.” I have already given my reasons for regarding this language as the costume under which Christ’s assumption of his new kingdom is presented (see pp. 122-131); and also as being fulfilled, or beginning to be fulfilled, as was expressly declared it should be, in that existing generation (pp. 150-5). To assume that any other event or period is intended is utterly without warrant. Besides, the immediate connection shows that the apostle referred to a near event. He was expecting that both himself and his brethren would live to see it, and describes what should happen to those that did, founding thereon those earnest words of comfort and

warning which are contained in the chapter following.

“And the dead in Christ shall rise first.” This is not the “first resurrection” mentioned in Rev. 20: 5; as Ellicott says, “not with any reference to” that, “but, as the following *then—ἐπετα*—suggests, only to the fact that the resurrection of the dead in Christ shall be prior to the assumption of the living.” I understand by this, that the first act of Christ in his kingly glory, was to bring into his “prepared place” the whole number of the pious dead who had departed before that event. They had indeed survived death and were existing in the ethereal and immortal bodies which they had then put on, but they had not been received into the “many mansions” appointed to be the final abode of the blessed, and which had been “prepared” for their reception only when Christ ascended thither in his own resurrection body. In this blessed assumption to his own dwelling-place, was their resurrection complete. In the language of the church’s ancient triumphal hymn of the *Te Deum*, “When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.”

5. THE CHANGE OF THE LIVING.

This ascension at the initiation of the Parousia of those who had slept in Christ completed the resurrection proper. As after that dispensation was begun there should be “no more death,” as the believer in Christ should “never die,” there could never be in the same sense as before any more resurrection.

And yet those who survived unto the Parousia and those who thereafter lived under it during all the Christian ages could neither expect to abide here in the flesh forever, nor depart in these fleshly bodies to join the risen saints in the resurrection world. Hence the announcement by the Apostle of a mystery before undisclosed, the CHANGE OF THE LIVING. "Then we that are alive, that are left unto the Parousia of the Lord, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." 1 Thess. 4: 17. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52. The peculiarity of this language requires that it should be carefully considered in detail, clause by clause.

Who, then, are meant by "the living"? If there had been no misreading of the term Parousia and no consequent confusion as to the time intended, the answer surely would be very plain. They were the persons of "that generation" which he so repeatedly and emphatically declared should not pass away till all that he had predicted was fulfilled. They were those who should not taste of death till they had seen him coming in his kingdom. They were "we, the living," i. e., Paul himself and the Thessalonians. And as the Parousia is not a point of time, a single day or year, but a dispensation covering the duration of Christ's everlasting kingdom, so it includes all who live under that dispensation, or will live under it in all coming time. That such was Paul's meaning

most commentators now admit. The Greek word translated "that are left," — *οἱ περιλειπόμενοι*—says Ellicott, "is simply and purely *present*. At the time of writing these words St. Paul was one of the 'living' and 'remaining,' and as such he distinguishes himself from the 'sleeping' and naturally identifies himself with the class to which he belonged."

These shall "not sleep." That is, they shall not, as those under the old dispensation had done, descend into Hades, there to wait for Christ's coming. Hades exists no longer; the risen Lord has abolished it, and holds possession of its keys in remembrance of his triumph.¹ Henceforth his people pass *directly* to his presence without going through that intermediate place. Plainly this is the meaning of Christ's words to Martha, "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me *shall never die*." We should remember what death had been to those of preceding ages,—how drear and forbidding the dark underworld that awaited them,—to have any realization of what such a promise would be to them. Of course, this psychical body would have to be put off in the ordinary course of nature, but this would no longer be *death*. It would be, as Paul termed it, "to depart and be with Christ." Henceforth

"There is no death; what seems so is transition."

"By the death of Christ," says Alford (2 Tim. 1: 10), "Death has lost his sting and is henceforth of

¹ When Lafayette sent the key of the demolished Bastile to Washington it was a sign and a proof that that hideous prison-house existed no longer.

no more account; consequently, the mere act of natural death is evermore treated by the Lord himself and his apostles as of no account (compare John 11: 26; Rom. 8: 2, 38; 1 Cor. 15: 55; Heb. 2: 14), and its actual and total abolition foretold. Rev. 21: 4."

They shall be changed *instantaneously*. This appears still to be in contrast with the state of the sleepers. A long time elapsed after they dropped the natural body, before they arose from Hades into the light and blessedness of heaven. But Christians who live in and under the Parousia shall pass thither at once. The change shall be "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Observe: it is not said that all shall be changed in the *same* moment;¹ that it shall be simultaneous with the whole body of Christians who shall live under the Parousia. It could not be, in fact, because all do not live at the same time. Generation shall succeed generation through all the ages. Each individual, as he completes this life of probation shall, when the Lord calls him, pass at once to his "place" in the many mansions.

"One gentle sigh his fetters breaks;
We scarce can say, 'He's gone!'
Before the willing spirit takes
Its mansion near the throne."

They shall be caught up in the clouds *into the air*. Of course, this is at the time of the change. The form of speech is apparently taken from the translation of the prophet Elijah. As he did not die, but

¹ "Here it is as little said that all shall be raised *at the same time* as in verse 25 that all the spiritually dead shall be quickened simultaneously." Meyer on John 15: 28, 29.

was caught up in a chariot of fire and cloud into heaven so Christians will be rapt away in glorious cloud chariots,—“the clouds forming the element with which they would be surrounded, and in which they would be borne up to meet their coming Lord. The transformation specified in 1 Cor. 25 : 52, 53, will necessarily first take place, upon which the glorified and luciform body will be caught up in the enveloping and up-bearing clouds.” Ellicott. Need it be said that these are not the clouds of our material atmosphere? The expression “into the air,” conforms evidently to popular apprehension, as when we speak of going *up* to heaven. Says Ellicott, “The air, as de Wette well observes, marks *the way to heaven.*”

This change of the living shall be,—that is *begin* to be,—at the same time that the sleepers in Christ are taken up to the presence of the Lord. “Caught up *together with them* ;” i. e., says Ellicott, “we shall be caught up with them at the same time that they shall be caught up.” Paul had just before said that those who were living at the time of the Parousia should not precede the sleepers ; so now he says the sleepers shall not precede the living. Those from Hades, these from time ; the former after long waiting, the latter instantaneously, shall experience the full power of the resurrection, being ushered together into the presence of the glorified and now coming Messiah.

Both these events shall be at his coming in his Parousia. The risen dead and the changed living

shall be caught up together to *meet him* in that coming. The apostle adds, "So shall we ever be with the Lord." This shall be the fulfillment of his promise and of his prayer, that they whom the Father had given him should be with him where he is to behold his glory. John 17 : 24.

It is scarcely necessary to say that this grand series of events occurs wholly in the invisible world. The coming of Christ with his angels, the blowing of the trumpet, the ascension of the risen sleepers, the instantaneous change of those living under the Parousia and their assumption to meet the Lord in the air,—all these are spiritual events, above the sphere of sense. Their indices appear here in the changed aspect of death to Christ's people, the radiant peace which fills

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate," and in the dear remains which we so tenderly lay away in the earth whence they were taken, but their occurrence as facts lies within the veil, to be first seen by the Christian only when the Saviour comes to him, to receive him to himself.


Before we leave this momentous subject, two or three additional remarks on the general aspects of the doctrine will be in place.

First, it is obvious that the view now presented entirely excludes the theory of an *intermediate place* for the departed between death and the resurrection, or between this world and heaven. I confess myself greatly astonished often to see such a theory accepted as a fact in recent theological discussions, and built

upon as a reliable foundation for other doctrines. If I can understand anything of the relations of Christ's kingdom to the older dispensation, I must regard Hades and its functions as pertaining *exclusively* to the latter. When he revealed to the grieving eleven the many mansions above in his Father's house, and assured them that he was in a little while coming to take them to a place *there* prepared that they might be *with him*, he most assuredly declared that there was to be nothing, whether of place or state, "intermediate" between them and heaven. For *He* is not in Hades still. His Father's house is not in the underworld. It is not possible to conceive of the saints being with him without being in the highest world of glory. And if so, there is for them no "intermediate place." And to this agree those highest human standards of theology, the venerable Westminster and Savoy Confessions. "The souls of men, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them; the souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies, and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell. Besides these *two places* of souls separated from their bodies the Scripture acknowledgeth none." Ch. 31, § 1.

And this shows us how unscriptural and baseless is the theory of a possible probation in Hades,—either a second for those who misimproved the pres-

ent, or a first for the heathen and those who are supposed to have had no "fair chance" on earth. If Hades no longer exists, it can afford no place for a probation to any. Let it be granted that Christ preached the gospel to the antediluvians, who were detained under the imperfect conditions of that earlier time, how does that imply that he will do so when that imperfect stage has passed away? The coming of the Messiah into the world, in the fullness of time, changed the condition of the world in many most important respects. Sin was not the same thing, either in its heinousness or God's treatment of it, that it is now. "In the generations gone by," said Paul to the Lycaonians, "he suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways." And to the Athenians, "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Acts 14: 16; 17: 30. No one judges of the intoxication of Noah, the polygamy of the patriarchs, the idolatries and barbarism in general of the early Israelites, with the same severity as if committed now. Whatever mitigations, then, were conceded, either in God's providence in this world or in the waiting place of the departed in Hades, because of the imperfect conditions of those twilight days, they argue nothing whatever for like concessions in these times of midday splendor, when the Light of the world has come, and that which was in part has been done away. Why, then, should we go back to the weak and beggarly elements, not merely of the Mosaic dispensation, but of the ages before



that, the very twilight of the world, to find precedents for Christ's administration? Why thus confound the old and the new, and re-enact, with even more glaring inconsistency, the judaizing follies which made so much mischief in the times of the apostles, and received so often their unsparing condemnation?

This leads me to remark further, that the view of the resurrection now given conserves, as no other does, all the important doctrines of our religion. It recognizes Adam as the parental head of the race, and gives a potent reality to the whole history of the temptation and fall, and its consequences to the race of man. Grant that that narrative may not be servilely literal,—that it is the *costume* under which facts and events, which we are now beginning to read in the whiter light of science, were presented in an age to which science was unknown, still it accepts what was the evident *meaning* of that history, and which constitutes the broad foundation on which the gospel system of sin and salvation is based. It gives an intense significance to the doctrine of Christ's incarnation, and his relations to the race as its Second Head. It shows regeneration and spiritual growth in the soul as accordant both with fact, as taught by consciousness and experience, and theory, as explained by philosophy. It makes Christ's resurrection, as Paul does, the first fruits and the pledge of our own. What other theory, I ask with confidence, so adapts itself to all the established doctrines of Christianity, and so conserves and crowns the whole?

SECTION IX.

THE SPIRITUAL BODY GLORIFIED.

We have now followed out, imperfectly but as our space permitted, the history of that corporeal organization which in its higher nature forms the distinctive character of man, the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*. We have seen it when it came in primal dignity and beauty from the hand of the Creator. We have witnessed its fall and enslavement by sin, under the corrupt bondage of the psychical body. We have traced its course of discipline and training in this state of vanity, a prisoner in hope, where through the incarnation of Christ and the ministry of the Holy Ghost it received the quickening of a new life and a spiritual resurrection. We have beheld its prison doors at last opened, and the redemption for which it had waited attained, not now to descend to a new prison and a new unknown waiting for an indefinite period in Hades, but to emerge in the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. It remains now only to glance for a moment at that glory; to conjecture as we best can, in view of what has been advanced, and of what the Scriptures teach us as in a glass darkly, what may be some of the conditions of the heavenly life.

1. My first remark is that the spiritual body, which, with the soul, originally bore the divine image, which still survived within the present psychical body, and emerges therefrom with the soul at death, retains in the heavenly state the *present human form*. The authorities cited by Mr. Cook as

having demonstrated its present existence teach that it has that form now; that could it be dissolved out of the animal structure, as the osseous and muscular system, the veins, the arteries, and the nerves might be, it would be everywhere coincident with the human physical outline.* In the scene of the transfiguration, not only Christ himself, but Moses and Elijah, evidently had that form. The Saviour appeared in it to St. John in Patmos. Even the angels are always represented in the same manner. "We assume," says Mr. Taylor,¹ "that the apparent import of some passages and phrases of Scripture tends to suggest the belief that the die of human nature, as to its form and figure, is to be used again in a new world. Partly on the ground of inferences from general principles, and partly on the strength of particular assertions, we suppose that the fair and faultless paradisiacal model of human beauty and majesty, which stood forth as the most illustrious instance of creative wisdom—the bright gem of the visible world—this form, too, which has been borne and consecrated by incarnate Deity—that it shall at length regain its forfeited honors, and once more be pronounced 'very good,' so good as to forbid its being superseded; on the contrary, that it shall be reinstated and allowed, after its long degradation, to enjoy its birthright of immortality."²

¹Physical Theory, Chapter xi.

²"As to form, the resurrection body will correspond to the fact that man was created for Christ, and therefore in his consummation will become like the image of Him who is our elder-born brother." Dorner, *Fut. State*, p. 111.

2. The second inference, in the same direction, is that having the human form, that spiritual body will wear, sufficiently, at least, for recognition, *the features* of the present body. President Dwight, in his sermon on the resurrection, says, "That the body will be the same, in such a sense as to be known, appears sufficiently evident from the Scriptures. Mankind will know each other in the future world, and their bodies will be so far the same as to become the *means* of this knowledge."¹ Here, then, we find an answer to the question so often wrung from bereaved and sorrowing hearts, "Shall we know our friends in heaven?"—a question forced upon them by the defectiveness of our traditional ideas of the resurrection. As before remarked, it is impossible to frame a definite conception of a disembodied spirit. Form and features are the result of extension, and that is a property of matter. The attributes of spirit are thought, feeling, volition, but these do not constitute personality. There is nothing in such case for the imagination, the creative faculty of the mind, to lay hold of and shape into a conception which it can think of, much less can view as corresponding to an actually existing being. Therefore, to ordinary apprehension the heavenly world is a realm of shadows, and the broken heart turning back from its cheerless emptiness cries out piteously for any evidence that the dear departed can ever be known. But if the soul goes forth not unclothed, but arrayed in its glorious spiritual body,

¹ Vol. IV., pp. 434, 5.

bearing the known and loved features of this life, with their expression only intensified by the perfection they will have attained in putting on immortality, then the recognition will be even more easy than here on earth.

3. So, thirdly, the conditions are realized upon which *society* becomes possible. As the risen saint can "be with" his risen Lord, so risen saints can be with *each other*. There can be intercourse and communion between them. They can *together* worship and serve. From the East and the West they can come and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. Heaven becomes a community; its inmates members of the family of Christ, one in him as he is one with the Father.

4. It does not seem impossible or improbable that the *relationships* of the present world, in their spiritual aspects at least, may be continued in the resurrection life. Have not the words of Christ, in reply to the Sadducees, been pressed beyond his intended meaning? In that life "they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels." But that is not saying that the effects of this first of all earthly relations do not continue. The work of probation was very largely wrought out through these very relations. The mother is often as truly a mother to her son's spiritual as to his earthly life. Husband and wife who were really united in love, and for twenty, forty, and sometimes sixty years lived together in the most intimate of all ties,—working in the common tasks of life, and sharing together

in all its outward experiences, become so molded to each other and assimilated in all the elements of their being, that they are spiritually one. It is a species of violence even to conceive of all this so done away as to render these two persons no more or different towards each other in the heavenly state than towards any others. So with the difference of sex. In it, probably more than any one thing of time, are the causes which determine human character. How is it possible that a retribution which consists in the *fruits* of an earthly probation should show no correspondence to these earthly peculiarities? How can it be true that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," if the reaping do not bear some distinct and recognizable marks of the sowing?¹

In the doctrine of the spiritual body, then, as now exhibited, we see a ground for anticipating the continuance, in all their spiritual aspects and results, of the present relationships of life. We do not believe that all the pure loves, the tender sympathies, the sweet companionships of time, which give to life here its chiefest enjoyments, are to perish with the expiring breath. We cannot reprove as unfounded the yearning of the mother for the meeting with her little one at the portals of the heavenly mansions.

¹ "An absolute abolition of the sexual distinction would not be different from an abolition of personal identity. But its continuance does not necessarily imply a continuance of that external bodily manifestation of it which was its characteristic in this life." Delitzsch, Bib. Psy., p. 546.

Rather is it the very inspiration of Christian hope which sings:—

“She is not dead,—the child of our affection—
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

“In that great cloister’s stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin’s pollution,
She lives whom we call dead.

“Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

“Thus do we walk with her and *keep unbroken*
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance though unspoken
May reach her where she lives.”

So with all the other ties of nature. Because they are such we believe them to be immortal. Were there no other proof of this, the very fact that our Lord himself was born into these human relationships, and sanctified them by his divine experience, would be to us a pledge of their perpetuity. He will no more cease to be the Son of Man than he can cease to be the Son of God.

5. In fine, we may conclude from all these considerations, that the heavenly world is much *nearer to us*, not only in space and time, but also in its essential nature, than we have been wont to imagine. Though it be a spiritual world, it is yet a world of *substance*. If its inhabitants are in part human be-

ings glorified, is it too much to infer that its scenery, its employments, its joys, are those of earth glorified? Is there no meaning in the description of a heavenly city, with streets and houses, and a river of life, and fruit-bearing trees, and white robes, and palm branches of victory, and harps, and vials of odors, and all manner of precious stones, and the bread and the new wine of the kingdom, of which the Lord will partake with his people? For disembodied spirits, indeed, having no element to connect them with a material universe, all these can have no appreciable meaning. But to those who have been made like to Christ in his resurrection body, they may all be as real as that body itself. They give us glimpses of a world having substance and color and warmth; a world that we can think of; with pleasures and businesses that we can anticipate, instead of formless shadows and mirages as unsubstantial as the fancies of a dream.

6. At the same time, we have a substantial basis on which to build those conceptions of *a life higher* than this of earth, which it is reasonable to expect in heaven. For as the spiritual body excels the fleshly in all the elements of beauty and strength and capacity, so we may believe that its separate experience, both active and passive, will be immeasurably superior to that of the present life. Mr. Isaac Taylor has drawn out the supposed particulars of such a condition in his "Physical Theory of Another Life," a work in which the boldest conjecture is mingled with the most careful philosophy, in sketch-

ing the consequences which may be conceived to follow the substitution of a spiritual for the present animal body. They are, to state them in our own words, 1. An enlarged power of mind over matter, such as shall enable one to move at will through the physical universe. 2. A direct perception and knowledge of all the facts of that universe. 3. An intuitive knowledge of the interior nature and properties of all matter. 4. A perfect memory. 5. The power of incessant mental activity. 6. The power to carry on many processes of thought at the same time. 7. An intuitive perception of abstract truth, however complicated. 8. The power of exact infallible utterance, in other words, a perfect language. 9. The body a perfect instrument and servant of the mind.

I could not, if I attempted, develop the consequences of such a supposed series of facts as constituting, in part, the elements of the spiritual life, as this learned and able author does. I refer to them as giving us hints which we may use, and add to at our pleasure, in our endeavors to make that life real, and so an object of stimulating hope and rational expectation. To that end we need two things—that the world which is to be our final home shall be something higher than this, and at the same time shall not be wholly unlike this. While thus satisfying our most ardent anticipations, it will wear also aspects of familiarity that will make it a home to us. It will promise us society, scenes, occupations, and even service, like those to which we had been trained

while fitting for that world, only transfigured in glory and joyousness as becomes the dwelling-place of the Lord.

“For doubt not that in other worlds above,
There must be other offices of love ;
That other tasks and ministries there are,
Since it is promised that His servants there
Shall serve Him still.”—Trench.

“And it may be that all which lends
The soul an upward impulse here,
With a diviner beauty blends
And greets us in a holier sphere.”—Whittier.

PART IV.

CHRIST AS JUDGE.

IN his Parousia, Christ was to exercise the functions of a JUDGE. "This is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Acts 10: 42. "The Father doth not judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son, that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." John 5 : 22, 23. This, indeed, is one of the prerogatives pertaining to him as King. That sovereign authority which gives law to his moral universe, guards also its honor and applies its sanctions. We have seen (p. 28) that in the Old Testament usage the two words signifying to *reign* and to *judge* are nearly synonymous, and often used interchangeably. But it is more in accordance with modern usage to conceive of the two as distinct, understanding by the latter the execution of law, and, in general, the maintenance of the principles of justice and righteousness among the subjects of his kingdom.

SECTION I.

THE COSTUME OF THE JUDGMENT.

The form under which this part of our Lord's administration is presented to us, like most other mat-

ters in eschatology, is to be found in the Old Testament. Says the learned Joseph Mede, "The mother-text of Scripture whence the church of the Jews grounded the name and expectation of the *Great Day of Judgment*, with the circumstances thereto belonging, and whereunto almost all the descriptions and expressions thereof in the New Testament have reference, is that vision in the seventh of Daniel, of a session of judgment when the fourth beast came to be destroyed; where this great assizes is represented after the manner of the great *Synedrion*, or Consistory of Israel, wherein the 'Pater Judicii' had his 'Assessores' sitting upon seats placed semi-circle-wise before him, from his right hand to his left. 'I beheld,' says Daniel (verse 9), 'till the thrones or seats were pitched down' (viz., for the senators to sit upon; not 'thrown down,' as we of late have it), 'and the Ancient of Days (Pater Consistorii) did sit,' etc., 'and I beheld till the Judgment was set' (i. e., the whole Sanhedrim) 'and the books were opened.' Here we see both the form of the judgment delineated, and the name of judgment expressed, which is afterwards yet twice more repeated. Ver. 21, 22, 26. From this description it came that the Jews gave it the name of *Yom Din*, and *Yom Dina rabba*, the 'Day of Judgment,' and the 'Day of the Great Judgment;' whence, in the epistle of St. Jude (ver. 6), it is called *χρίσις μεγάλης ἡμέρας*, the judgment of the great day. From the same fountain are derived those expressions in the Gospel, where this 'day' is intimated or described; 'The

Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven.' 'The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his holy angels,' forasmuch as it is said here (ver. 1) 'Thousands and thousands ministered unto him,' etc., and that Daniel saw (ver. 13) 'One like the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven, and he came unto the Ancient of Days, and they brought him (or placed him) near him,' etc. Hence St. Paul learned that 'the saints shall judge the world,' because it is said that 'many thrones were set,' and (ver. 22) by way of exposition, that 'judgment was given to the saints of the Most High.'"¹

In his own description of the judgment (Matt. 25: 31-46), our Lord somewhat modifies the form. The Judge is here the King sitting in majesty upon his throne. A vast retinue of angels attend him, and wait to do his bidding. His heralds, with sounding trumpets, summon the nations of mankind into his presence. Their deeds are tried by the fundamental law of the kingdom,—the law of love,—of which the King himself, in the days of his humiliation, had been an exemplar. Those who have obeyed that law are received to the place of favor on his right hand, and admitted to the honors and felicities of his kingdom, while those that have failed in that obedience are banished from his presence to the prison prepared for the King's enemies, there to be punished for ever.

Such is the costume under which the grand and

¹ Quoted in Bush's *Anastasis*, pp. 279, 80.

solemn truth of the judgment is presented to us, and, like that which invests the coming of Christ, it is specially adapted to promote the ethical purposes to be served by that truth. Nothing could be more awe-inspiring; nothing better fitted to awake in every being who is to stand at that tribunal that reverent fear of the Lord which is "the beginning of wisdom." If, however, we seek to fit it into a system of doctrine covering the whole field of eschatology, and especially to adapt it to the doctrine of Christ's Parousia and kingdom, it is necessary for us to go somewhat behind this costume, and learn, if we can, more exactly what is signified by it.

SECTION II.

THE TIME OF THE JUDGMENT.

Popular apprehension assigns it, like the second coming and the resurrection, to the distant future. Not that this fact is any where expressly asserted in the Scriptures. It seems to be an inference drawn from the figure employed of a judicial session, after the manner of the great Sanhedrim, or of an oriental court, where a monarch, in the presence of his grandees, dispenses his favors and his frowns towards his subjects. As the judgment is to extend to the entire family of man, so the whole are conceived of as *standing together* before the Judge, which implies, of course, that it must be after all have lived. The same impression has been strengthened by the phrases, the "end of the world" and "the last day." So that really a mere incident in

the costume or form under which the majestic truth has been presented to our conceptions has been taken as a literal representation of fact. The Judgment as the grand event which is to adjust for every individual the results of life,—the retribution for all its guilt, the reward for all its virtue, the source of all hope and comfort under its toils and trials, and of all admonition against its weakness and wrongdoing, is shorn of its power as an impending reality, and made little more than a name. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed *speedily*, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” Eccl. 8: 11.

There are, however, very grave difficulties of a positive kind attending the theory which places the general judgment far away, at the so-called end of the world. For by that supposition, large numbers of mankind are not judged until long after probation has closed, and after they have been for ages in heaven or hell. Take the apostle Paul, who had so longed to depart and be with Christ. We cannot doubt that his holy longing was gratified by the cruel edict of Nero full eighteen centuries ago. All this time Paul has been with his Lord, enjoying the blessed resurrection of the martyrs, and ascending from grade to grade in the endless progression of glory and felicity. Are we, then, to believe that after so long a period,—nay, as much longer as from now to the end of the world,—he is to be recalled from his martyr’s throne and crown, to come and take his place by the side of Judas who equally long

ago went "to his own place," and with those who will have died but yesterday, before the judgment seat, to give account of and to receive for the deeds done in the body? Surely not. All our ideas of fitness revolt from such an incongruity. The eternal blessedness of those who, having died in the Lord, rest from their labors, is not to be broken in upon afterwards by such a proceeding. Whatever theory of the judgment involves such a conclusion *must* be wrong.

So with its assumed *simultaneousness*,—where but in the mere costume of the prediction is it to be found? Human life and probation are not simultaneous; if the judgment is to be, a portion of men must be judged before they live, or another portion long after,—which involves the inconsistency just noticed.

Let us see if a careful inquiry into the Scriptures will not discover a more reasonable view than is involved in either of those suppositions.

1. The office of Christ as Judge is an *essential part* of his office as King, and cannot be separated from it. If he now reigns over mankind as their moral ruler, he must in that very fact be taking cognizance of their moral conduct as obedient or disobedient subjects. He must, in the nature of things, approve the former and disapprove the latter. He may, in order to allow time for a probation, suspend for a while the administration of the proper rewards of their conduct, but even this is a *judicial* act, performed by a present judicial authority in present ex-

ercise. The details of the judgment,—the time, place and manner of it,—are within his discretion and ordered by his supreme wisdom, but the *fact* of it is one already existing, because he has already entered upon his supreme office as King. This must have been the meaning of his emphatic assurance to his disciples, that before some of them standing by him tasted death they should see him coming in the glory of his Father with his angels, and *then he would reward every man according to his works*. Matt. 16: 27, 28. That is, he would begin an administration of reward, as each individual should finish his probation and depart thence to appear before his throne.

2. The nature of moral conduct and of man as a moral being is such as to imply a virtual judgment, self-registered in every act performed by him, which judgment is simply declared and confirmed at the bar of God. He who sins, in so doing places himself under condemnation. Whatever is fearful in being in that relation toward God and his law is already incurred, save only that for a time, while here in the flesh, he is in a world where he may repent and find pardon. This is what Christ himself says, “He that believeth not hath been judged already”—*ἡδὴ κέχρηται*. John 3: 18.

Already, too, has this judgment been pronounced upon him. His conscience is the representative of God, and in his name speaks instantaneously of his guilt and punishment. And with what appalling distinctness and power this is sometimes done we all

know,—how it blanches the cheek, and paralyzes the limbs, and conjures up nameless shapes of terror to haunt the soul and fill it with “a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries.” Thus all the elements that can enter into the final sentence exist already. They may be intensified by future sin, and they may,—thank God,—be blotted out by repentance and the cleansing blood of Christ, but these do not alter the fact that the present character itself determines the present state. It needs no formal trial, as in human courts, to ascertain justice. Christ’s judgment seat, the accuser, the evidence, the law, and the verdict, are all in man’s own heart.

8. It is implied in a state of probation that the results of it shall be entered on at the close of that period. In the present life man is in the forming stage of his being. Law in its strict requirements is made subservient to Grace. Life and death, heaven and hell, are held out to him for his choice, while instruction and entreaty, and the discipline of Providence, and, above all, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, are given that he may be won to the love of God. Now all this implies that when the end of such a state is reached, its results are expected at once to follow. Both reason and Scripture are silent as to any second probation beyond this life. Why, then, should there be any delay in entering upon the due rewards of probation? Why should the good man who has toiled and suffered for Christ’s sake,—who has finished his course and kept the

faith,—be made to wait for the crown of righteousness laid up for him? Why should the sinner who has exhausted hope, and become ready for “his own place,” be kept from going to it? What end of justice, what requirement of government, calls for delay for thousands of years before the end, for which everything else was but preparation, should be reached?

4. The current language of our Saviour and the apostles in relation to this subject seems to teach that the judgment period, or “day,” as the Jews termed it, was then about to begin. Take, first, the great judgment scene described in Matt. 25: 31–46. “*When* the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, *then* shall he sit upon the throne of his glory,” etc. But in the previous part of this discourse it is repeatedly and explicitly affirmed that that coming should be in that generation; and the words “when” and “then” link the judgment with it in most express terms. I can make no meaning of this language if it does not teach that the tribunal at which all nations should be gathered was to be established within the period mentioned. So with the earlier declarations just quoted. “The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then shall he reward,—i.e., begin to reward—every man according to his works.—There be some standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” The same idea runs through all the writings of the apostles. Of the numerous passages

heretofore cited to show that they regarded the Parousia as near, not a few mention the judgment particularly as then to be initiated. "He hath appointed a day in the which he will (Greek, is about to) judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." It is not the simple future tense of the verb that is here used, but a phrase made with the auxiliary verb μέλλω, signifying "*to be about to do or suffer any thing, to be on the point of*"—(Robinson). It implies that the event to which reference was made was very near. The same word is employed in 2 Tim. 4: 1. "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall—is about to—judge the quick and the dead." 1 Peter 4: 5. "Who shall give account to him that *is ready* to judge the quick and the dead." This phrase is stronger than the preceding; it denotes that all things are *prepared and waiting* for the event. Compare Acts 21: 13; 2 Cor. 10: 6; 12: 14; 1 Peter 4: 17. "For the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God,"—literally, "It is the time of the beginning of the judgment,"¹ a declaration which Alford expressly acknowledges as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem which was then near at hand. And in all those passages which speak of Christ's coming as a ground of joy or hope or fear, there is an implied recognition of it as the time when he will reward his faithful friends and punish his and their enemies,—in other words as the time of the judgment. The servants who had received the

¹ "ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα."

talents were to watch because they knew not at what hour their lord would come to call them to account for their trust. "Judge nothing before the time," said Paul, referring to the estimates in which the Corinthians were holding their different teachers, "until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall each man have praise of God." "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day, and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."—"Be patient, brethren, until the Parousia of the Lord; stablish your hearts, for the Parousia of the Lord is at hand. Murmur not one against another, that ye be not judged—*κριθῆτε*;—behold the Judge standeth before the doors." "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me to render to each man as his work is."

Instead, then, of mere inferences drawn from the figures under which it is described, or from the misunderstood import of the Jewish phrase of "the last day," I adduce these numerous express statements that the Judgment, so called, or that period in which Christ was to possess and execute the office of a Judge over mankind, and administer the appropriate rewards for their conduct, disciplinary in the present life and penal in the life to come, was to *begin*, at least, with the beginning of his kingdom in the generation then existing. And to this have conformed the facts of history. It was but a brief space

before the first Christians had evidence that their ascended Lord was a judge as well as a king. Even among their own number, two who had seemed to be disciples, and were perhaps receiving special credit for their zeal, were unmasked by a more than human discernment, and smitten in sudden death for their hypocrisy. It was the beginning of that winnowing process which the Baptist had said should mark the dispensation of the mightier One who should come after him. By a similar infliction, the Cyprian sorcerer, Elymas, was taught his temerity in resisting the preaching of Christ's word by his apostle. Meanwhile, during that long period of forty years from the ascension, the tempest of divine justice was gathering over the guilty city and nation once called the Lord's, which, when at last it was executed, struck the nations with awe, and has ever since stood forth in blazing light on the page of history as the great judgment from heaven upon the people who had crucified their own Messiah. And so it has been in all the ages. Rome, first the chastiser of persecuting Judaism, becoming herself a persecutor, was chastised in turn. Nero, the bloodiest of all her emperors, died a horrible death by his own hand, and the monsters who succeeded him perished mostly by violence amid the execrations of mankind; the barbarous northern hordes at last overrunning her territory, plundering her capital, and partitioning out her empire as lawful plunder. A priest who usurped temporal authority and, as vice-gerent of the Almighty, claimed the right to

make and unmake kings at his pleasure, and who in the pride of his power shed the blood of the saints not less abundantly than his pagan predecessors, is in turn thrust from his throne and made to drink the cup of humiliation which he had so often commended to others' lips. A nation whose capital witnessed a St. Bartholomew's day, and whose supreme assembly sought by a decree to legislate God out of existence and voted death an eternal sleep, is made to feel the horrors of a revolution at whose recital the cheek turns pale. A great Republic which boasted of her Christianity while holding four millions of souls in iron bondage, is arrested in her guilty boasting, and taught on a thousand bloody battle fields that the Christ whom she professed to worship was He whose office it was to break every yoke and let the oppressed go free. Do we need other testimony than the record of history itself to prove that there is a King enthroned over men,—ruling the nations with a rod of iron, and dashing in pieces like a potter's vessel? Says Van Oosterzee (vol. II., p. 801), "That the history of the world is a continued *judgment* of the world, is acknowledged by all who attentively and believingly observe it."

Thus, for nearly two thousand years Christ has been the Judge of the living. At the same time he has also been the Judge of the dead. In the history of individual souls, the present life is a season of probation, a dispensation of mercy and grace from his throne. But it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment. In the invisible

world, the judgment seat is ever set, and as the multitudes of men pass out of time they find themselves before that tribunal. They do not wait for ages before they are called to their account. Forthwith, as the scenes of eternity open on their view, they see the throne, the Judge and the books; forthwith do they hear the sentence, "Come ye blessed of my Father," or "Depart ye cursed." In other words, whatever under these figures is signified of judgment and eternal award is realized without delay. These go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. Then begins the career of retribution which is to have no end. No subsequent judgment in some far distant cycle of duration is to break in upon it, to repeat a transaction which has already been fully performed. The door of the prison house once closed will never be opened again; the children once safe in the many mansions of their Father's house will go no more out forever.

And this, we believe, is the "Day of Judgment,"—well designated as the Day of the Lord, and the Great Day. It is the day which began when Christ took his seat on his throne, and will last as long as his throne endures; that is, forever. Is it objected that the word "day" implies a more limited period, something analogous to an ordinary solar day? But this is the very word chosen by inspiration to represent the great geologic periods of the creation. Says Prof. J. J. Owen, "The phrases 'end of the world,' 'day of judgment,' 'day of the Lord,' and the like, are not to be compressed to an inconsiderable period of time like our day of twenty-four hours, but in the

very nature of things, must be referred to an *indefinitely prolonged period, the length of which is known only to God*. It is called the *day* of the Lord because it refers to a period definitely fixed in the counsels of eternity, and not because it is embraced in the limits of a common day. Thus in Gen. 2: 4, the work of creation is referred to as performed in a single day, whereas we are told in the preceding chapter that God was employed six days in the creation of the heavens and the earth. These days were probably great time periods, and yet we are not misunderstood, nor do we use language improperly when we speak of the day of creation. In like manner the process of the resurrection and final judgment may embrace long extended periods of time and yet be properly referred to as the day of the Lord, the day of judgment, or still more concisely, *the hour* when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth." Bib. Sac., Vol. XXXI., p. 369. So likewise, Prof. Van Oosterzee says, "It is self-evident that the imagery in which the last judgment is presented in holy Scripture admits of no literal explanation, and on that account all opposition to the reality of the fact by reason of the plastic form of its description arises, if not from malevolence, at least from misconception. Even in the Middle Ages it was readily granted—"totum illud iudicium, et quoad discussionem et quoad sententiam, non vocaliter sed mentaliter perficietur."¹

¹ "That entire judgment, as respects both the investigation and the sentence, will be performed not in audible words but in mental processes." Thomas Aquinas.

SECTION III.

AWARDS OF THE JUDGMENT.

I have already spoken of the blessed resurrection state of the righteous, a state which it seems superfluous to say will be eternal. Lest any untrue inference should be derived from an omission of that subject, I will venture a very few words here as to the punishment of the wicked.

Upon this awful subject the Scriptures give us but little specific information, and it were presumptuous to be wise above what is written. The terms which are used to describe it are probably figurative, designed to convey an idea of the fact and of its severity, rather than its precise nature. The leading idea of it is exclusion from the "place" prepared by Christ in his Father's house for his people, and banishment into the "outer darkness, where are weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." Of the locality, and the physical conditions of that abode, we can affirm nothing. Of the mental sufferings attending such a state; of the pangs of conscious guilt, rejection from God's favor, the extinction of hope, the torture of ever unsatisfied desire, and the like, we may form some conceptions, but have no measures by which to estimate their amount. It is enough to say that the soul will be *lost*. Further than this, it would seem best to leave the subject beneath the awful veil of darkness under which it is enshrouded in God's word.

On one point, however, I cannot deem the teach-

ings of the Scriptures to be doubtful, and that is as to the *perpetuity* of future punishment. Whatever possible meanings the phrases which describe it may sometimes have, I cannot resist the conclusion that they are designed to teach us that in this connection they mean endless duration. If the Scriptures were professedly to set about affirming that doctrine, I know not how they could do it more explicitly than they have done. It is not alone in single terms or in direct assertions; it is implied in a great many phrases and incidental utterances, which are often even more convincing, if possible, than the more positive forms of speech. Let it be remembered that our Lord himself is our principal instructor on this subject, and that the most fearful imagery and the most appalling language were spoken by his own gracious lips.

I may say one thing more. The decisions of the judgment are represented as final. I can find no hint of another probation after this present life,—a second probation for those who may be supposed to have had no “fair chance” in this. If any such there have been or may be among the inhabitants of time, they will most surely be fairly dealt with by a merciful God. With him we may safely leave them without attempting to find for them a grace that is nowhere promised, or a new probation of which Christ the Saviour has never told us.

Our doctrine, then, may be concisely stated,—THE PAROUSIA OF CHRIST IS HIS ABIDING PRESENCE AMONG MEN IN THE EXERCISE OF HIS MESSIANIC OFFICES OF KING, LIFE-GIVER, AND JUDGE. Those offices are three in their aspect only, as relating to different departments of his administration; in reality, they are one, constituting that “glory” which he received of the Father in reward for his humiliation and sufferings. The Parousia commenced when, after his ascension to his throne, he began to “come” or be manifested to men in the mighty acts performed by him. His three-fold offices are executed simultaneously, running parallel with each other through all time. Their consummation will be the complete restoration of this world to holiness and happiness. Their duration will be forever.

Of the doctrine thus presented, I desire to remark in review:

1. That it is to be regarded neither as a *præterist* nor a *futurist* view; rather does it include both. If it be affirmed that the Parousia began at the ascension, it is not meant that it is not also a fact of all the coming ages. If it be spoken of as the object of future expectation, it is not meant that it has not also begun to be enjoyed already. I ask especially that I may not be represented as saying that the resurrection is “past already,” or that the day of judgment occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem. The Parousia, including under it Christ’s reign as King, Life-giver, and Judge, is not an event, but a *dispensation*. If it began at the ascension, it is to

reach also into the far distant future, is to be, in fact, everlasting. Viewed, indeed, as a whole, it may with great propriety be spoken of as still future, for these two thousand years since the ascension, in comparison with the ages yet to come, are but as the first ray of the morning to the long, bright summer day. Nevertheless the morning *has dawned*, the Day-Star has risen, though the day in its consummate glory is still before us. Or, to repeat a figure already used,—we have set forth upon the illimitable ocean of Christ's reign; let it not be said that because we are as yet scarcely out of the harbor, we have not therefore left the wharf.

2. It is a view which *harmonizes*, as none other does with which we are acquainted, *all the teachings of the Scriptures*. Why is it that just now, as in fact has been true more or less during the whole Christian period, the Christian church is so divided in opinion on this subject? The answer is, because the Scriptures themselves seem to teach two or more contradictory things about it. They affirm the nearness of the Parousia, and bid men to live expecting and watching for it, and yet say it was to be at the end of the world, and to be accompanied by the resurrection and general judgment. Now the two parties choose each their own class of teachings, and fail to bring into harmonious relations with it the others. Adventists choose the *nearness*, which is (or was) a truth, and then compel themselves to look for the "end" and all the dread phenomena of the winding up of human affairs as immediately

impending events. Futurists, shrinking from the latter inference, *deny* the nearness, and defer the Parousia to the distant future. So with respect to the millennium. The Premillennarians are most surely right in holding that Christ was to come to *set up a kingdom* on earth, and reign over it as the Messiah, but are just as surely wrong in saying that that kingdom has not yet been set up, and therefore the coming is future. Postmillennarians are certainly right in holding that the kingdom was established on the day of Pentecost, and is to grow till it reaches its grand millennial glory, but are just as clearly wrong in holding that Christ was not to come till that consummation had been reached, and then not to reign over it, but to judge the world, and immediately surrender the kingdom to the Father. Now the Scriptures cannot, when rightly interpreted, teach both these opposites; they cannot so contradict themselves. There must be some way of harmonizing them, and this is what I have attempted to find. Take the Premillennarian doctrine (which seems to me least distant from the truth), and enlarge its conceptions of the Parousia both ways, carrying it back to the pentecost and onward into the future indefinitely; and then make the resurrection and judgment not single *events* but coincident parts of one grand *dispensation* under the reign of Christ the King, and the seeming contradictions are nearly all reconciled. Or take the Postmillennarian doctrine, and let it accept the scenes at the day of pentecost, which it acknowledges to have been a

coming of Christ, as the beginning of the Parousia; then let it similarly associate with it the resurrection and judgment as parts of the dispensation, and discard the unwarranted idea of Christ's giving up his throne, and we come again nearly to the same result. The past, present, and future meet in one grand whole. All the varied passages of Scripture drop into place in entire harmony. We have no longer need of inventing a theory of double sense; of supposing the inspired writers mistaken; that the primitive church was required to expect and to watch for events then thousands of years distant; that these thousands of years are what the Scriptures mean by "quickly," "at hand," etc. Is not, I cannot help asking, a theory which comes into the midst of these conflicting opinions and parties, and with a wider range than either comprehends them both, conserving what is true, and correcting what, by reason chiefly of its narrowness, is erroneous, reducing all to a substantial harmony,—is it not self-evidently to be accepted as, in the main, the true one?

3. And this result, let it be observed, is obtained not by any sacrifice of the great truths which enter into the substance of the doctrine, but only by *modifications of the accessories* of time, order, manner and costume. The facts of the second coming of Christ, of his reign as King, of the resurrection of the dead, and the universal judgment, are fundamental in the gospel system; they constitute those "powers of the world to come" which enforce its demands upon every human heart. I would not yield for a moment

to any teaching which rejected or weakened their solemn import. In my judgment, the views now advanced do neither. It can not detract from the Parousia that it is held as a dispensation rather than a transient event; that its date was A.D. 30 rather than A.D. 1884, or any other more remote. It cannot weaken its significance that it was spiritual and invisible, save only in the mighty works attending it, rather than visible, amid the clouds, with the crash of an expiring universe. It does not detract from Christ's kingly glory that he reigns by his Spirit and providence over a kingdom of redeemed souls, rather than over a visible organization whose capital is at Jerusalem. It does not take from the majesty of that kingdom that it is to be without end, rather than surrendered by its king as soon as he attains undisputed dominion. It does not make the resurrection any the less momentous that it occurs when the earthly life ceases, rather than after a slumber of ages in the grave. It does not diminish the solemnity of the judgment that the soul stands forthwith before the great white throne, rather than waits for that ordeal till the end of time. The *facts* involved in all these things are unchanged. The joyous promises they imply to Christ's people are undimmed. The solemn admonitions they afford to those outside his kingdom are not weakened. Life, death, probation, retribution, time, eternity, are all words of unabated meaning. Is it not worth while, then, to consent to such easy modifications in non-essentials—the mere drapery of the doctrine—as shall

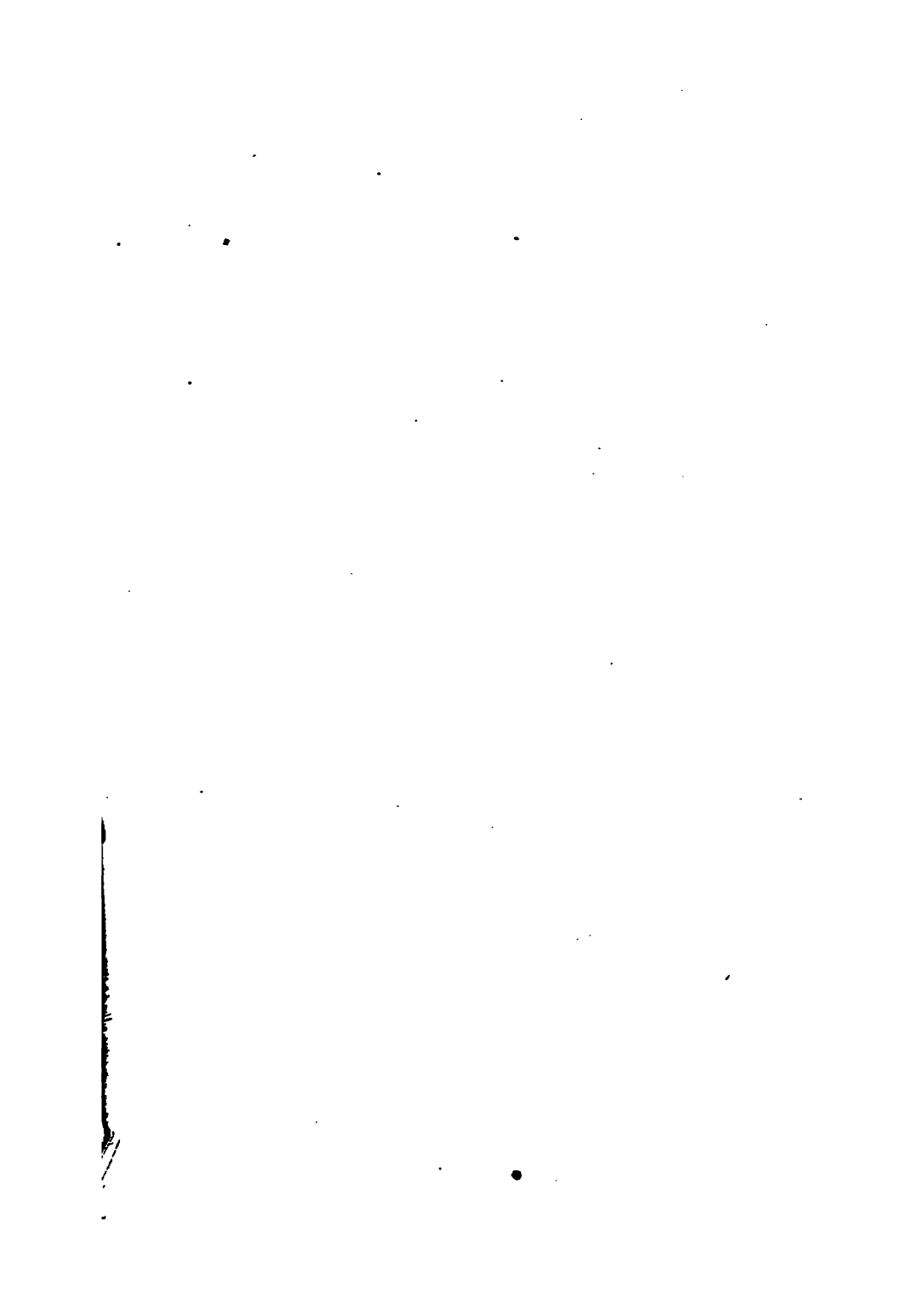
allow of a harmonious adjustment of the facts; the bringing of all that *is* essential into a symmetrical body of truth which may command the acceptance of all who receive and love God's word, and will be more than ever before the power of God unto salvation?

4. Nay, I am not willing to rest the matter there; I must insist that these views give a *greatly increased meaning and force* to all the truths involved in them. They make the Parousia not a matter of expectation only, but a present fact. Christ *has* come. He is already on his throne. He is ruling men now. He is separating them,—by his Word and Spirit and Providence—as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; he is giving life to dead souls by regeneration; and the blessed resurrection life to his people when the earthly life is no more; he is pronouncing the sentence “Come ye blessed,” or “Depart ye cursed,” to those who having finished probation stand before him in judgment. Could our eyes be opened, as those of Elisha's companion were in the besieged city, we should see all these as present facts. They would not lie so remote from us, beyond the horizon of the future, as to have lost half their solemn significance. That we cannot now see them,—that we are still in the flesh,—does not alter those facts or rob them of their tremendous import.

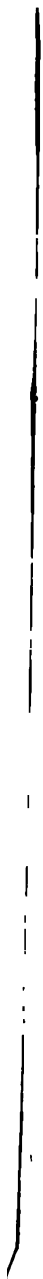
Nor, let us remember, is that sight far distant from any of us. A very few days more, and the scene in all its unspeakable grandeur will burst upon our vision. It is but the cessation of this fluttering

breath, the hushing to rest of this throbbing heart, and all that we now reason of and speculate about will break upon us as matters of knowledge and experience. Then, according to his prayer and promise, shall we be forever with the Lord; and let us not count it a vain expectation, too, that we shall be *like him*, for we shall see him as he is.









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